Quantification and Conversation

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1. Introduction

In ordinary contexts, when I utter the sentence

(1)   Everything is in the car.

I communicate something like

(2)   All of the things that I ought to have put in the car in these circumstances are in the car.

and I do not communicate anything like

(3)   Absolutely everything in the universe is in the car.

I begin by sketching two views about how it is that I manage to communicate what I do by uttering (1) in an ordinary context.

   The first of these two views is what I call *restrictionism*.[1] According to restrictionism,   the   explanation   of   how   I   communicate   what   I   do   is

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[1]   This view is sometimes called a "semantic" approach to quantifier domain restriction. The proponents of this view are legion. See, for example, Recanati (1989, 2004), Stanley and Szábo (2000), Neale (2000), and many others.

straightforward: I utter a sentence, with assertive intent, which has a truth-value-determining content that is precisely what I intend to communicate. On this view, when I utter (1) in an ordinary context, my utterance is literally true, since my utterance is equivalent to something like (2). The idea is that (1) is context-sensitive: its associated domain of quantification varies with context. In this example, the context fixes the set of things which I ought to have put in the car as the domain of quantification. The exact nature of this context sensitivity is itself a matter of dispute. Some think that an analysis of (1) turns up a "hidden indexical" that restricts the domain. (The "hidden indexical" is supposed to be a real part of the syntax of the sentence, but a part that is not vocalized in the utterance.) Others think that the context-sensitivity is a case of what John Perry (1986) calls "unarticulated constituents": the restricted domain is a constituent of the content of my utterance, but it is not the semantic value of any expression—hidden or otherwise—in the utterance, and is in that sense *unarticulated* (see Stanley (2000) for discussion). But, however one settles this issue about the nature of the context sensitivity, the distinctive feature of restrictionism is that (1) is context sensitive in a way that renders ordinary utterances of (1) literally true.

The second view of how I manage to communicate as I do is what I call *generalism*.[2] According to generalism, (1) is literally false relative to an ordinary context because it is equivalent to the false (3). On this view, I communicate something true by uttering a falsehood.[3] The explanation of how this works is the typical Gricean one: I communicate something true by way of my audience (perhaps unconsciously) recognizing a special sort of intention on my part, where this intention-recognition is the result of an inference to the best explanation for why I uttered (1) given commonly known facts about the context. The fact that the intention is recognized entails that the relevant content is communicated (see Grice, 1975). For illustrative purposes, let me remind you of how this *might* go in the particular case at hand, although I am not committed to the details of this illustration. I say something that is false, thereby flouting the maxim of quality,

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[2]   This is sometimes called the "pragmatic" approach to quantifier domain restriction. As I read him, Grice (1975) accepted this view; although he never discusses the matter directly, he does list ∃ and ∀ among those "formal devices" with which he maintains that ordinary language counterparts are equivalent despite apparent divergences of meaning. See also Bach (1994, 2000) and Cappelen and Lepore (2002).

[3]   Bach (2000) points out that the generalist should not say that quantifier domain restriction always involves communicating something true by uttering a falsehood. Bach's example is 'Not every bottle is empty', ordinary utterances of which convey a restricted content even though the sentence is true even on the generalist's view.

according to which one must make statements one believes to be true.[4] The most natural explanation of this behavior is that I intend to communicate something equivalent to (2) (perhaps I intend to do so *by means of my audience's recognition of this very intention*). My audience comes to be aware of this fact (perhaps unconsciously), and this entails that I thereby succeed in communicating something equivalent to (2) to my audience.[5]

According to a common view of the dialectical situation between generalists and restrictionists, each position has a virtue that the other lacks (cf. Stanley and Szábo, *op. cit.*, p. 240). The virtue of restrictionism is supposed to be that, unlike generalism, it accommodates the intuitions of competent speakers of the language about the truth-values of such utterances as my utterance of (1). In particular, according to this common view, whereas restrictionism accommodates the intuition that ordinary utterances of (1) are true, generalism does not.

On the other hand, according to this common view of the dialectical situation, generalism holds a methodological advantage over restrictionism. There are at least two reasons for this. The first is that the semantics of quantified sentences that emerges from the generalist account is extremely simple, and avoids the controversy about the nature of the posited context-sensitivity. The second reason is that positing context-sensitivity arguably violates the methodological principle

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4   Stanley and Szábo (*op. cit.*, p. 235-6) hold that, on a generalist view, the obvious falsity of ordinary quantified utterances is always what gives rise to the implicature. Bach (2000, p. 264-5) holds that "lack of relevant specificity" is the relevant feature (see his example in the last note). I see no reason for the generalist to suppose that the feature of ordinary quantified utterances which gives rise to a restricted conversational implicature must always be the same.

5   Bach (1994) distinguishes ordinary Gricean implicatures from what he calls implicitures (with an 'i'). Implicitures are supposed to result from what he calls the explicit content of an utterance by the addition of material that was, as Bach puts it, *implicit* in the utterance. (The explicit content of an utterance is roughly what I am calling the truth-value determining content, although Bach holds that sometimes the explicit content is incomplete and thus fails to determine a truth-value.) By contrast to implicitures, Bach holds that implicatures are entirely separate from the truth-value determining content of the utterance. (Bach's notion of impliciture is similar to Carston's (1988) notion of explicature, but I agree with Bach, against Carston and other relevance theorists that explicatures do not determine the truth-value of the utterances which give rise to them.) I acknowledge Bach's distinction, and I think that my discussion could be put in terms that accord with his view on these matters. It is, however, somewhat simpler for my purposes to say—as Bach (section 4) thinks that Grice would—that implicitures are a special case of implicatures. In any case, this seems to me a purely terminological difference. Bach denies that the difference is merely terminological. But pursuing this dispute would take us too far afield.

that Grice (1978) calls "Modified Occam's Razor," according to which meanings are not to be multiplied beyond necessity. For if one thinks that the relevant context-sensitivity involves the existence of a Kaplan-style *character* (e.g., a character for a hidden indexical element associated with the quantifier), and if one thinks that characters of this sort are a kind of meaning, then positing such a character unnecessarily would violate Grice's principle.[6]

These arguments for the thesis that generalism enjoys a methodological advantage are compelling. But I will argue that the other half of the common view is mistaken: restrictionism holds no intuitive advantage over generalism. In fact, the opposite is true: *the intuitive evidence better supports generalism than restrictionism*. I will make the case for this startling claim in sections 2 and 3. I thus believe that generalism enjoys both an intuitive and a methodological advantage over restrictionism. Intuitive and methodological advantages, however, are not decisive in the face of further objections. For this reason, in sections 4 – 6, I will defend generalism from three other attacks: the so-called "binding argument" against generalism, an attack based on Recanati's "availability hypothesis," and the charge that generalism runs afoul of the "scope principle." With these threats neutralized, I will conclude that generalism prevails over restrictionism.[7]

Before proceeding, a terminological note is in order concerning my use of the word 'context'. As I use the word, 'context' does not express a technical notion from semantics. Rather, it expresses an intuitive notion familiar from the observation that 'you', 'today', 'him', 'now', 'I', etc., designate different things in different contexts.[8] I do not offer any theory of what contexts are, what it is for a sentence to be true relative to a context, or what in general their role is (or should

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[6] Williamson (2003, fn. 1) says that what I call generalism "facilitates" the thesis that absolutely general quantification is coherent. He may have in mind the point that, if every quantifier is absolutely general, then there is no need to identify a special context (say, the context of metaphysical theorizing) in which the absolutely general domain is relevant. This avoids worries about the existence of such a special context. Generalism might thus appeal to metaphysicians who seek to defend the metaphysical enterprise from naysayers.

[7] Generalism is a "minimalist" hypothesis in the sense that it denies that the truth-value determining content of an ordinary quantifier claim varies across contexts. I will not investigate whether, and to what degree, my argument for generalism can be adapted to establish other "minimalist" hypotheses of this sort. Although I do believe that similar arguments can be given in other cases of interest (for example, in the case of metaphor), I believe that the similarity is not exact, and the cases probably have to be treated separately.

[8] Compare the term 'model' from model-theoretic semantics. This is not an ordinary term but a technical one, whose meaning is stipulated by semanticists.

be) in semantics. Nor do I claim that every meaningful expression can be semantically evaluated relative to every context. I do, however, offer the following observations. First, we have clear intuitions about the evaluation of at least some expressions relative to some contexts. For example, we have the intuition that, relative to a given context, 'today' designates the day of that context.[9] And this intuition cannot be understood in terms of what an utterance of that word refers to (or would refer to) in that context. For the context in question may be speechless: intuitively, the sentence 'No one speaks' is true relative to various contexts in which everyone is silent, and yet there is no utterance of that sentence in such a context, for otherwise it would not be speechless and the sentence would not be false relative to it (see Kaplan, *ibid*., 495, and also 1989b, 584–5). The ordinary notion of context that figures into these intuitions seems to be a serviceable notion, and I shall help myself to it.

2. The Intuitive Evidence Favors Generalism

Consider (1) again:

(1)   Everything is in the car.

As any undergraduate logic student knows, (1) is logically equivalent to (4):

(4)   It is not the case that there is something that is not in the car.

Since (1) and (4) are logically equivalent, they have the same truth-value in every context. But (4) is intuitively false relative to an ordinary context. Of course, most contexts in which (4) is *uttered* are not ordinary, because an utterance of (4) would normally be quite unusual. But we may still consult our intuitions about the truth-value of (4) relative to an ordinary context (one in which (4) is not uttered, and in which everything that ought to be in the car for the purpose at hand is in the car). When we do this, we see that (4) is intuitively false relative to such a context. This intuition is in tension with the intuition that (1) is true relative to an ordinary context.

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[9]   Cf. Kaplan (1989a). Kaplan's use of 'context' sometimes seems to express a technical notion, sometimes a non-technical one. But his classic paper is full of insights about the ordinary notion in any case. He distinguishes circumstance from context (p. 495ff), a distinction I will (harmlessly) ignore.

This shows that our intuitions do not uniformly support restrictionism. Furthermore, our intuitions about (1) and (4) are inconsistent with one another, so that it is not possible for any theory to validate both of them. Generalists validate the second intuition at the expense of the first; restrictionists validate the first at the expense of the second. The question, then, is whether either the generalist or the restrictionist has an advantage in explaining why our intuitions conflict in this manner. And here an asymmetry arises in favor of the generalist, as I will explain.

The generalist gives an absolutely general reading to the quantifiers in both (1) and (4), and so he can claim that (4) seems false because it *is* false, and that (1) seems true because, although it is false, it ordinarily implicates something true.[10] But the restrictionist cannot tell a similar story. For although the restrictionist can say that (1) seems true because it *is* true, he cannot say that (4) seems false because it ordinarily implicates something false. The reason is that, according to the restrictionist, the content of (4) (relative to an ordinary context in which I am the speaker) is the proposition that it is not the case that there is something that I ought to have put in the car that is not in the car. (Again, *uttering* (4) would render the context non-ordinary, but we can nevertheless consider what the content of the sentence is relative to a context in which it is not uttered.) And, if this is the content of (4) relative to an ordinary context, it is hard to see why I would be taken to communicate something else upon uttering it. This asymmetry suggests that the intuitive data favors the generalist account.

One might reply to my argument by claiming that, if an utterance of (1) would conversationally implicate something true, then so should an utterance of the logically equivalent (4), contrary to the envisaged generalist account. I think that this is not the case, however. As I have suggested already, an utterance of (4) in an ordinary context would be puzzling. This is because, in an ordinary context, an utterance of the needlessly wordy (4) would violate to no end the maxim "Be perspicuous." No explanation of the violation would lead the audience to a conversational implicature. In the face of the audience's failure to explain the violation, the "default" literal reading would kick in, and we would regard the utterance as false.

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[10] Cappelen and Lepore (*op. cit.*, p. 204 - 8) suggest a slightly different explanation: they hold that the intuition that (1) is true arises because philosophers of language wrongly conflate the truth-value determining content of an utterance of (1) with "what is said" by someone who utters the sentence. Cappelen and Lepore argue that these contents are distinct. If we assume (what seems plausible) that there is a sense of 'what is said' in which, in the cases at issue, the speaker says what she implicates, then my view and this one are equivalent.

This point provides another reason to deny that the restrictionist has an acceptable explanation of the intuitive data. For if, as I just argued, an utterance of (4) would be ordinarily regarded as anomalous and as conversationally implicating *nothing*, it follows directly that the restrictionist cannot correctly explain the apparent falsity of (4) by claiming that an utterance of it would conversationally implicate something false.

One might worry that, since generalism predicts that (4) will seem false relative to an ordinary context of the sort I have described, it should predict that the *negation* of (4) will seem true relative to such a context. But the negation of (4), namely 'Something is not in the car', does not seem true relative to an ordinary context in which everything that ought to be in the car for the trip is in the car; rather, it seems false in such a case.[11] However, the generalist can accommodate this intuition, for he may say that the sentence is true but seems false because an utterance of it would implicate the falsehood that something that ought to be in the car isn't. Unlike (4), the sentence 'Something is not in the car' does not contain gratuitous syntactic complexity that interferes with the ordinary Gricean mechanisms.

3. The Context-Shifting Reply

The most likely restrictionist reply is that, although (4) is true in an ordinary context, it seems false relative to such a context because an utterance of (4) would shift the context to a new one in which the relevant domain would be some enlarged domain. In the new context, (4) would be false. So our intuition that (4) is false relative to the *original* context arises because (4) *is* false relative to the *new* context, but we fail to mark the shift from the original to the new context. This is what I call *the context-shifting reply*. There are several problems with this reply.

First, the restrictionist owes an explanation of *why* the context would shift in the indicated way (thus shifting the domain). A shift in context of the relevant sort would not help to make sense of the utterance, for the utterance would be anomalous whether the context shifted or not. Indeed, the suggested context shift renders the utterance false rather than true. Why then would the context shift in the suggested way? It is hard to see what the answer could be.[12]

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[11] Thanks to an anonymous referee for raising this worry.

[12] Perhaps the restrictionist could respond that, because of the anomalous nature of an utterance of (4), there is *no* context relative to which it would be naturally interpreted, and, as a result,

Second, the context-shifting reply requires that there is a context relative to which (4) is true, namely, the original context that prevailed prior to the utterance of (4). But there can be no such context. To see why, note that (4) is standardly taken to entail this claim:

(5)   It is not the case that *there exists* something that is not in the car.[13]

It seems that there *could not* be a context relative to which (5) is true. But, if there cannot be such a context, and (4) entails (5), then (4) cannot be true relative to any context either, contrary to the context-shifting reply.

One might reply to these considerations by claiming that the intuition that neither (4) nor (5) could be true relative to any context results from the fact that neither one could be true relative to *any context in which it is uttered*. Since uttering either one always shifts the context in a way that makes it false, perhaps we wrongly conclude that there is no context at all relative to which either (4) or (5) is true. But this explanation is inadequate. 'No one is speaking' is always false when uttered, but there is no tendency whatsoever to suppose that this sentence cannot be true relative to some speechless context. To the contrary, it seems that 'No one is speaking' *is* true relative to some such context. Therefore, the fact that a sentence is always false when uttered does not explain its seeming to be false relative to every possible context.

Furthermore, this sort of reply does not cope well with cases in which an utterance of (4) seems true. For example, consider a case in which you are embarking on a road trip, and a companion says "I am worried that there is still something that is not in the car." Exasperated, you reply, "*It is not the case that there is something that is not in the car*." [14] Here it seems that the true, restricted content might be communicated, contrary to the claim that that uttering the sentence always shifts the context in a way that makes it false.

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the utterance would seem untrue. However, (4) seems *false* rather than merely untrue as this response predicts. And, in any case, the second problem I'm about to raise for the context-shifting reply applies to this response as well. Thanks to Brooke Roberts here.

[13]   Here I need entailment only in the sense of the necessity of the material conditional. If (4) does not entail (5) in this sense, then it could happen that something is not in the car, even though it is not the case that there exists something that is not in the car. It follows from this view that there could be something that does not exist, which most philosophers will join me in rejecting as absurd.

[14]   Thanks to Mark Crimmins for this example.

This example also gives rise to an additional consideration in favor of generalism. For, according to the generalist, the syntactic complexity of the sentence in this case is not gratuitous because your intention is to emphasize your disagreement by uttering the negation of the exact sentence that your companion uttered. But, given that your utterance is equivalent with the false (5), it follows that what is communicated is something other than the truth-value-determining content of the utterance. This is just as generalism predicts, and contrary to restrictionism.

I have been arguing that the intuitive evidence better supports generalism than restrictionism. Generalists can, but restrictionists cannot, adequately explain recalcitrant intuitions. If this is right, and if generalism has the methodological advantage for which I argued at the outset, then generalism has an overall *prima facie* advantage over restrictionism. But an overall *prima facie* advantage is not enough to warrant commitment in the face of other objections to generalism. It is therefore to three such objections that I now turn.

4. The Binding Argument

The first objection to generalism that I will consider is the binding argument, due to Stanley and Szábo (*op. cit.*).[15] The argument centers on examples such as this one:

(6)   In every room in John's house, every bottle is in the corner.

The main idea of the argument is given in this passage:

> [T]he proposition intuitively expressed by an utterance of [(6)] is the proposition that in every room x in John's house, every bottle in x is in the corner. Therefore, the quantifier domain variable associated with 'every bottle' is *bound* by the preceding quantifier expression. (243)

Let us grant, for the sake of argument, the controversial thesis that the sentence

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[15]   This style of argument has received considerable attention in the literature. See, for example, Partee (1989), Bach (2000), Taylor (2001), Cappelen and Lepore (2002), Recanati (2002), Pagin (2005), Stanley (2005), Rett (2006), and Neta (2007). And, for a nice overview of this literature, see Sennett (2008).

(6_o)   In every room x in John's house, every bottle <u>in x</u> is in the corner.

is not merely equivalent to (6), but is the result of making covert expressions in (6) overt. So let us grant, for example, that the variable 'x' occurs in (6) covertly. We have not thereby granted that a quantifier domain variable occurs in (6), since 'x' is not a quantifier domain variable: the items in the domain over which 'x' ranges are not supposed to be domains, but rather *rooms* (and, as everyone will agree, rooms are not domains).[16]

   Stanley and Szábo must therefore agree that there is no overt quantifier domain variable present in (6_o). Rather, they hold that the following sentence, rather than (6_o), is the result of making all of the relevant covert expressions in (6) overt:

($6_o'$)   In every room x in John's house, every bottle <u>in f(x)</u> is in the corner.

The variable 'x' ranges over objects of some sort (in this case rooms), and each context of utterance assigns to 'f' a function from objects to domains. Thus, context in this way determines a domain as the value of 'f(x)'.

   Stanley and Szábo call 'f(x)' a quantifier domain variable. But this is misleading: it is not a variable in the usual sense, but a complex expression that cannot be bound by any familiar quantifier. Thus, the fact that the familiar quantifier expression 'In every room' in (6) seems to bind something does not show that 'f(x)' is covertly present in (6): if 'f(x)' were covertly present in (6), it could not be bound by a familiar quantifier expression such as 'In every room'. So if the binding argument is this:

1. 'In every room' in (6) binds something.
2. So it must bind a quantifier domain variable that is covert in (6).
3. The covert presence of a quantifier domain variable in (6) is inconsistent with generalism.
4. So generalism is false.

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[16]   Stanley and Szábo make this very point in connection with a different example: 'In most of John's classes, he fails exactly three Frenchmen'. According to Stanley and Szábo, "Here, the quantifier domain for 'three Frenchmen' varies as a function of the values introduced by 'most of John's classes'. But the values introduced by this latter quantifier expression are classes (in the educational sense), which are not appropriate entities to be quantifier domains" (250). Their solution is this: "If quantifier domains are sets, then the context must provide a function from classes (in the educational sense) to sets. The function will map a class onto the set of students in that class." (250)

then the argument is invalid in its step from premise 1 to premise 2. All that follows from premise 1, on the assumption that what is bound has to be either overt or covert in (6), and the assumption that (6) contains no overt variables, is that there is a variable that is covert in (6). It does not follow that the covert variable is a quantifier domain variable in the intended sense. So, on the first understanding of the argument—the one that sticks closely to what Stanley and Szábo actually say—the argument is invalid.

But perhaps the argument can be understood like this:

1. 'In every room' in (6) binds something.
2. So it must bind a variable that is covert in (6).
3. The claim that 'in every room' binds a covert variable in (6) is inconsistent with generalism.
4. So generalism is false.

Now the question is why the generalist should accept premise 3. Why is it inconsistent with generalism that 'in every room' in (6) should bind a covert variable? As I understand their view, what Stanley and Szábo would say is that, if 'in every room' binds a covert variable in (6), then there is also a covert variable in

(7)   Every bottle is in the corner.[17]

And the presence of a covert variable in (7) is, they think, inconsistent with generalism.

Rather than diagnose the problem with this argument, I will argue that positing a covert variable in (7) is absurd. First note that proponents of the binding argument need the covert variables to be logically relevant, since covert variables have to be bindable by overt quantifiers. Thus, according to the proponents of the binding argument, the relevant covert expressions occur in the logical form of (7). But, if two sentences have the same logical form, and they are composed of the same expressions in the same order, then they are logically equivalent. As a result, (7) is logically equivalent to

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[17] Recanati (2004, section 7.6) questions the move from the presence of a covert variable in (6) to the presence of one in (7). He believes that the addition of 'in every room' alters the structure of the embedded sentential clause.

(7ₒ)   Every bottle <u>in x</u> is in the corner.

But the problem is that (7) and (7ₒ) are not *logically* equivalent, even in context. For consider this pair of arguments in a context where the value of the free variable is a certain room:

> Every bottle in x is in the corner.
> <u>b is a bottle.</u>
> b is in the corner.

> Every bottle is in the corner
> <u>b is a bottle.</u>
> b is in the corner.

The latter argument, but not the former one, is intuitively valid. But if the first premise of each argument is logically equivalent to the first premise of the other argument, then the arguments must both be valid if either one is. Hence, the premises are not logically equivalent, and so there is no logically relevant hidden variable in (7).

Finally, even if there is a covert variable in (7), it is a non-trivial move from this claim to the conclusion that generalism is false (cf. Cappelen and Lepore 2005, p. 72 – 3). For suppose (7) contains a covert variable to which contexts assign locations. And suppose that, at every context, this covert variable is assigned *the universe*. Then (7) would *not* be context sensitive, in the sense that it would not have different truth-values relative to different contexts, and we could consistently suppose that we use (7) to communicate in just the way that the generalist claims (via Gricean mechanisms). As I have indicated, I think that the presence of such a covert variable is absurd. But, even if there is such a variable, the only reason not to think that it receives a constant assignment of the indicated sort is an appeal to intuitions about the content of (7) relative to different contexts. As I have already argued above, these intuitions (when systematized and taken as a body) in fact favor generalism.

To sum up, Stanley and Szábo's formulation of the binding argument is invalid. A reformulation of the argument is valid. But, this reformulation is still unsuccessful for two reasons. First, it leads to absurdities concerning logical consequence. And, second, it depends on the thesis, against which I have argued

above, that restrictionism enjoys an intuitive advantage over generalism. I thus conclude that the binding argument does not threaten generalism.

5. The Availability Hypothesis

The second objection I will consider concerns the generalist's Gricean explanation of why ordinary utterances of (1) seem true. The objection I have in mind turns on the observation that participants in an ordinary speech situation in which (1) is uttered will not regard the absolutely general quantified proposition as what is said by an utterer of (1). In this sense, the generalist's explanation of why ordinary utterances of (1) seem true requires the thesis that what is said by an utterer of (1) in such a situation is not consciously available to the participants of that speech situation.[18] This conflicts with what Recanati calls the "availability hypothesis," according to which what is said by an utterer must be consciously available to the participants of a speech situation. But Recanati argues that this principle is a commitment of the sort of Gricean outlook that the generalist accepts. If he is right about this, then the generalist's explanation fails.

Recanati gives three arguments for a Gricean commitment to the availability hypothesis: (i) it follows from Grice's view that conversational implicatures must be calculable, (ii) it follows from Grice's view that "saying" is a variety of non-natural meaning, and (iii) it follows from the fact that what is communicated by a given utterance "consists" of what is said and what is implicated. I reject all three of them, as I will now explain.[19]

Argument (i) attributes to Grice the view that conversational implicature must be calculable *by the participants in the conversation*. For, it is only if these participants need to be able to calculate the implicature "on the fly" that what is said must be immediately consciously accessible. This, however, was not Grice's

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[18] Here and in what follows I will assume that there is a notion of "what is said" on which the content that determines the truth-value of the utterance (when there is such a content) is what the utterer says in assertively making that utterance. In fact, however, I think that 'what is said' is ambiguous, and in many cases it is more naturally taken to refer to a proposition which is not the truth-value determining content of the utterance, but is merely communicated via Gricean mechanisms. (Cf. Bach (2005, section 2) on the distinction between "locutionary" and "illocutionary" notions of "what is said.") If this is right, it follows that there are two interpretations of the availability hypothesis, and the generalist can accept the interpretation on which 'what is said' refers to the communicated content rather than the truth-value determining content of the utterance.

[19] Also see Bach (1994, pp. 137–40) for a forceful critique of the availability principle.

view. He held—or at any rate should have held—that the relevant conversational implicature must be calculable by someone or other.[20] He allowed for the possibility that speakers themselves do not generally make the sort of complex explicit calculations that he discussed, but that they, as he put it, "intuitively grasp" (1975, p. 50) the implicature without calculating it. It is a short step from this view to the thesis that some conversational participant might not even be capable of explicitly calculating an implicature that she intuitively grasps. And even if Grice had not taken this view of the matter, it is an obvious position for a neo-Gricean to take, and it leaves us with no reason to suppose that what is said must be consciously available in the sense that Recanati intends (cf. O'Rourke 2003).

This view fits well with how we often employ the strategy of inference to the best explanation, which is, I take it, how we normally come to understand the implicature in a given speech situation. For example, consider a situation in which I discover that my bicycle is missing from my porch. The best explanation (we may suppose) is that the bicycle was stolen. This can be calculated on the basis of the evidence: I never lock up my bicycle, there has been a rash of bicycle theft recently, my bicycle was valuable, thieves are attracted to stealing valuable bicycles, etc. Surely the fact that I know all of this data is relevant to my coming to know, upon seeing that my bicycle is missing, that it has been stolen. But, in an actual situation, I do not do anything like go through an explicit calculation. Rather, upon seeing that the bicycle is missing, I draw the inference to the best explanation without consciously going through the evidence and weighing different hypotheses. The evidence and various possible hypotheses might not even be, in Recanati's sense, consciously available to me at the time. If I were not very bright, I might not be able to reconstruct the relevant calculation, even given plenty of time. Similarly, in a speech situation in which one comes to believe that the speaker is implicating something, one ordinarily does so without needing all

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[20] Grice never explicitly says that this is his view. What he explicitly says is that it must be "within the competence of the hearer to work out, or grasp intuitively" (1975, p. 31) that the implicated content is required to see the speaker as being cooperative. In other words, it the hearer needs to be capable of *either* calculating *or* intuitively grasping the implicature. So, when he says that implicatures must be calculable, he presumably doesn't mean that each person has to be competent to calculate the implicature, since some people (e.g., small children and the mentally impaired, not to mention those who have never been instructed in Grice's theory) are only capable of intuitively grasping them. Note that Grice also isn't saying that calculability by someone or other is *sufficient* for something's being a conversational implicature.

of the data to be consciously available. (It is of course an empirical question whether some sort of "unconscious calculation" goes on, but that is beside the point.)

Argument (ii) is that the availability hypothesis follows from Grice's view that "what is said" is a variety of non-natural meaning.[21] I'll grant Grice's view of non-natural meaning for the sake of argument. I'll also grant that Grice took "what is said" in Recanati's sense to be a variety of non-natural meaning. Recanati thinks that the availability hypothesis follows from these claims since "One of the distinguishing characteristics of non-natural meaning, on Grice's analysis, is its essential overtness. Non-natural meaning works by openly letting the addressee recognize one's primary intention … The view that 'saying' is a variety of non-natural meaning entails that what is said … must be available—it must be open to public view. That is so because non-natural meaning is essentially a matter of intention-recognition" (2004, p. 13).

Recanati is right that, on Grice's view, the addressee must recognize the primary intention of the speaker. But Grice is not committed to the thesis that the intention, or the recognition of that intention, must be overt or even available to the participants in the speech situation. It is consistent with Grice's view that the intention, and the recognition of that intention, might remain tacit. And I see no reason to saddle Grice with the implausible thesis that every person in a given speech situation is capable of making tacit attitudes of this sort overt. In fact, Grice's own remarks are sympathetic to the point. For Grice says "Explicitly formulated linguistic … intentions are no doubt comparatively rare." He thinks that "In certain linguistic cases we ask the utterer afterward about his intention, and in a few of these cases . . . the answer is not based on what he remembers but is more like a decision, a decision about how what he said is to be taken" (1957, p. 387). These remarks are not only contrary to the view that Recanati attributes to Grice, they are also quite plausible. In a wide range of cases, it just does not seem that we have *overt* or *explicit* conscious awareness of our intentions in communication. Furthermore, if Grice really did hold that non-natural meaning always involves overt conscious awareness of the relevant intention, the right response would be to alter Grice's analysis of non-natural meaning in some way—to complicate it to deal with more ordinary cases in which there is no such overt conscious awareness. For this reason, I take it that the second argument is on shaky ground at best.

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[21] Grice (1957) distinguished natural meaning, as in 'That smoke means fire', from non-natural meaning, as in 'The doorbell means that someone is at the door'.

What about argument (iii)? This is the weakest of the three arguments. If what is communicated "consists" of what is said together with what is implicated, then cases of irony involve communicating contradictory claims, since cases of irony often involve saying one thing but communicating the opposite.[22] But surely this is false: when I declare that I love fruitcake with a smirk, I do not communicate, even in part, that I *do* love fruitcake (though of course I *say* that in the relevant sense of 'say'). What I communicate is that I dislike fruitcake. The premise of argument (iii) is thus open to a decisive counterexample, and the argument is unsound.[23]

6. The Scope Principle

I now turn to a final argument against generalism. This argument employs the "scope principle," according to which, if a sentence has a certain conversational implicature relative to a certain context, then it would not have had that conversational implicature relative to that context if, in that context, it had occurred inside the scope of a logical operator such as a conditional.[24]

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[22] Grice thought that saying p entails meaning p, and thus held that the speaker only "makes as if to say" the literal content of an ironic utterance. One can of course introduce technical terminology that functions in this way, but, in the ordinary sense, I take it to be obvious one can say something that one does not mean, and does not communicate. See Bach (2001, pp. 17 – 18) for further support of this view.

[23] Someone might think that irony is a special case and that the claim that what is communicated "consists" of what is said together with what is implicated might still hold with some generality even if it does not hold in the case of irony. But there are other counterexamples as well. For example, "the deer runs at midnight" might be the code to get into a secret cult meeting, but the utterer of this code in such a case does not in any sense communicate that the deer runs at midnight. Rather, what is communicated is that the person belongs in the meeting, etc. Also, Saul (2002) provides cases in which what is implicated is not successfully communicated because of audience error. Perhaps these special cases are exceptions along with irony. But (i) there may be yet other special cases, and (ii) it becomes hard to see what the basis is supposed to be for making exceptions to the principle. Once the scope of the correct application of the principle becomes unclear in this way, application of the principle becomes tendentious.

[24] Cohen (1971) pursues this strategy to argue against Grice's view that conjunction is semantically insensitive to the order of conjuncts. Recanati (1989) contains the first explicit formulation of the principle. His formulation is somewhat different from my own, but the differences are not relevant here. Carston (1988; 2002, section 2.6) is also sympathetic to these sorts of anti-Gricean arguments based on the scope principle. See O'Rourke (2003) for a powerful critique of the scope principle and its use in criticizing Grice.

The scope principle can be used against the generalist as follows. The generalist claims that 'Everything is in the car' is false, but that it ordinarily communicates something true in which the domain is restricted. But 'Everything is in the car' continues to mean the allegedly implicated thing when it occurs in the sentence 'We are not ready to go unless everything is in the car'. Hence, by the scope principle, we know that 'Everything is in the car' does not in fact have the conversational implicature that the generalist claims that it has.

The scope principle might be right for some cases. In particular, it might be right for cases in which a *true* sentence is used to communicate something true. But it gets the cases with which the generalist is concerned wrong. According to the generalist, 'Everything is in the car' is false but is ordinarily used to communicate something true. This is of course controversial. But it is less controversial that there are *some* false sentences that can be used to communicate truths. For example, consider the sentence 'She must really love fruitcake' as uttered about a woman grimacing at a fruitcake festival. The speaker would ordinarily communicate that the person did *not* like fruitcake, and the speaker would do this by uttering a falsehood. Now consider the conditional, 'If she's *that* excited to be here, she must really love fruitcake'. In this conditional, 'She must really love fruitcake' still carries the implication that the woman in question does not like fruitcake. But the scope principle would therefore have us regard this as part of its literal meaning. Surely this is wrong.

Or consider a man, Bill, who hates the Dodgers, and imagine advising someone concerning Bill as follows:

> If you really want to get on Bill's good side, you should tell him that you like the Dodgers!

In this example, the embedded claim that the addressee *should* tell Bill that he likes the Dodgers is naturally taken in an ironic spirit, and despite embedding it carries the implication that the addressee should *not* tell Bill this. And here, not only does the implicature come across despite embedding, it seems to *depend* on the claim being embedded in this context.[25]

Yet another sort of case is when emphasis is used to object to the pronunciation of a claim rather than its content. For example:

> He did not call the POlice. [He called the poLICE.]

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[25] Thanks to Dan Korman for this example.

I assume that the correct treatment of this sort of example involves an implicature about the correct pronunciation of the word 'police'. And, when we embed this claim, it still carries the same metalinguistic implicature, as in this case:

> If you spoke English properly, you would realize that he did not call the POlice.

Again, this runs contrary to the scope principle, at least on the plausible assumption that the metalinguistic content is conveyed pragmatically.[26]

In all of these cases, the scope principle fails for claims that are false but can be ordinarily used to communicate something true. This is encouraging news for the generalist, since the generalist thinks that 'Everything is in the car' is similar to the examples I've mentioned in that, in each case, we have something that is false but can be ordinarily used to communicate something true. Since these sentences are in this way similar, and since the argument using the scope principle does not threaten the Gricean analysis of the examples I mentioned, I conclude that the principle poses no threat to generalism.[27]

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[26] Thanks to an anonymous referee for this example.

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