*Pure versus Hybrid Expressivism and the Enigma of Conventional Implicature (penultimate draft)*

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Conventional implicatures are meanings encoded by particles like *even*, *but*, *nevertheless*, *therefore*, and so on. Take the sentence (1) below with *even*:

(1) Even Granny got drunk

The truth-condition of (1)—it's *said-content*—is that Granny got drunk. The contribution of *even* is to *indicate* or *signal* a probability scale relative to some contextually given class of individuals in which Granny is the least expected to be drunk and all got drunk. The dual-content form of (1) is then:

**Said-content**: Granny got drunk.

**Implicature**: low subjective probability that Granny got drunk relative to a contextually determined class of individuals C;

Conventional implicature is conventional in the sense that it is a function of linguistic meaning and context in the way that truth-conditional content is. Nevertheless, although conventional in this sense it makes no contribution to truth-conditions. Rather it introduces a *pragmatic presupposition*. The delivery of content in implicature is in the mode of the *unsaid*. How exactly we should understand this mode will concern us greatly below.

The value hybridist can use the putative features of conventional-implicature bearing sentences to fashion a theory of value-sentences. Call this approach the *conventional implicature theory*, or *IT*.[1] For IT, value-sentences are dual-content sentences, just like (1) is. In producing a value-utterance, like *O is good*, the speaker U says that O has *F*, for some natural property *F*, and conventionally implicates approval of *F*-things—or instantiation of *F*, etc. So the dual-content form of such sentences is:

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[1] I defended this view in Barker 2000. See Copp (2001) for a related proposal.

   ***Said-content***: O is F.

   ***Implicature***: approval of instantiation of *F*.

IT can also be work for slurs, perjoratives, etc, sentences like *O is a pom*, which seems to carry both descriptive and evaluative content. So, the basic form for *O is a pom*, would be:

   ***Said-content***: O is English.

   ***Implicature***: disapproval of instantiation of *Englishness.*

IT can be supplemented with a theory of conversational pragmatics. In self-standing utterances of *O is good*, additional communicated content may be present due to the mechanisms of *conversational implicature*. The speaker, U, may conversationally implicate that she approves of *O*'s being *F*, or approves of *O*. Such content, however, would only be present under some circumstances, for example, self-standing utterances of *O is good*.

   In this paper I argue that once we accept that conventional implicature exists, and develop an adequate theory of how it works, then IT can be maintained as an adequate theory of value-language. However, making sense of conventional implicature is surprisingly challenging, and indeed touches on expressivism in a way that moves us beyond mere hybridism. That's because to make sense of conventional implicature, as a mode of unsaid content, we need already to accept a form of pure, non-hybrid expressivism about a range of locutions and constructions in natural language, or so I will argue. Moreover, the form of expressivism has to be a *cognitive expressivism*, one according to which (expressive) talk is truth-apt and belief-expressing. Once this expressivism is in place, we can have a hybrid theory of value-sentences, IT, for free. However, we may have lost some of our motivation for it along the way, since, pure, cognitivist expressivism becomes available.

## *1. Implicature and the Intersubjective Dimension*

Why believe that conventional implicature operators deliver non-truth-conditional content? Evidence for this contention is that we do not judge to be false sentences whose implicatures fail. For example, a sentence like (2) below doesn't appear to be false:

(2) Even Elvis was famous

Although we want to judge (2) incorrect, we don't want to affirm that it is false.

The fact that we don't want to affirm the falsity of (2) does not establish in itself that *even* contributes an implicature. (See Finlay 2005). We don't want to affirm that (2) is true either, that is, affirm:

(3) It is true that even Elvis was famous.

The fact that we affirm neither the truth or falsity of (2) is consistent with *even* introducing a *semantic presupposition*—a content whose failure generates a truth-value gap or simply a failure of bivalence whereas implicature is meant to leave truth-value untouched.

However, there is a fairly obvious reason why *even* cannot introduce a semantic presupposition. The said-content of an *even*-sentence like *Even Elvis was famous* is that Elvis was famous. *Even*'s implicatures have no semantic connection to that content of the kind that, if the implicature-content fails in the context, then the said-content of the utterance is undermined. (2) says what it says whether the implicature fails or not. If so, we ought to conclude that (2) is true, even if infelicitous. *Even* doesn't introduce semantic presupposition. The unassertability of (3) can be explained through conversational implicature. That is, a truth-attribution carries a generalized conversational implicature that the conventional implicatures of the sentence are fulfilled. (See Barker 2003 for discussion of this point.)

*Multi-Propositional Sentences*

If conventional implicature is not semantic presupposition it might be something else. Some authors, for example Bach (1999), attempt to assimilate conventional implicature to *secondary propositional content*. Bach's view is that implicature-bearing sentences are multi-propositional sentences in the following sense. (1), *Even Granny is drunk*, following Bach's proposal, comes out something like this:

(4) Granny, who, by the way, is extremely unlikely to get drunk, is drunk.

So, the content is (1) is:

Primary Proposition: <Granny is drunk>

Secondary Proposition: <Granny is extremely unlikely to get drunk>

According to Bach the whole sentence (4) will be true or false according to whether the primary proposition is true. If the secondary content fails to obtain, then the resulting evaluation of the whole sentence is upset. It's not clear that we want to say (4), as a whole is true. Though we can make sense of the judgment that part of what is said is true, part of what is said (secondary) is false.

Bach's approach isn't tenable. The issue I want to concentrate on is the supposed proposition that is the content of the implicature, the one to do with probability. What kind of probability are we concerned with? There are broadly two options: objective probability or subjective probability. Both options are problematic for Bach's propositional treatment of implicature. Let's look at the alternatives.

Are we conveying facts about objective probability with even-statements? That does not seem likely. People produce *even*-sentences on evidence that is insufficient to ground objective probability claims. Suppose I am at a party, and see people around me, of varying ages, but all are drunk. I might issue: *Even Grandma over there is drunk.* To be able to make this claim, I don't wait for the kind of evidence that I would require to convey that it's *objectively improbable* that a certain woman at the party is drunk. My *even*-sentence reflects my epistemic state, which, I admit, may fall short of reflecting reality perfectly.

That leaves us with the second alternative, that *even*-sentences express subjective probabilities. However, if that's what they express, what is, according to the multi-proposition hypothesis, the secondary proposition concerning this subjective probability? One idea is that the proposition is about the speaker's possessing a subjective probability state. In which case the *even*-sentence really has the form:

(5) Granny, who my credence state assigns low probability of drunkenness to,

is drunk.

But if this is the form of (1) we face another problem concerning how speakers judge each others' utterances of *even*-sentences. This takes a little explaining.

Evaluating the correctness of speech acts has two dimensions. The first dimension I call *production correctness*. In judging whether an utterance is *production correct* I am concerned with whether the speaker, given the information in their ken, made no error, broke no linguistic rule, in issuing their utterance. So, if someone utters, (2) *Even Elvis was famous*, I can judge that the speaker's utterance is production correct, if I find out that the utterer, U, thought that Elvis was a marginal case of fame. The speaker then makes no linguistic error in producing their utterance. Nevertheless, in this case, we still judge that U's utterance is wrong, but in another respect. This is the other dimension of correctness: *reception correctness*. In judging a sentence reception correct, I am committing myself to issuing the sentence (or some content equivalent utterance) in my own case. I accept the utterance in the sense that I am sincerely willing to produce it myself as an utterance expressing whatever mental states its utterance typically expresses. In the case of (2), assuming typical beliefs about Elvis, I am not inclined to produce the utterance. Although I judge its said-content true—it's reception correct at least with respect to truth-assessment—I am not willing to accept the implicature content.

What, however, guides reception-correctness judgment with respect to the probability attitude supplied by *even*? I think the following general thesis captures it:

> **ID-Even** (Intersubjective Dimension for *even*): H judges U's utterance of *Event O is F* correct iff H believes *O is F* and H has a subjective probability state assigning low credence to *O*'s being F (and O believes others in the contextually given class are *F*.)

In other words, in judging an *even*-sentence correct, as produced by another speaker, I am not concerned with whether they have the subjective probability state, but with whether I have the state. I call this the intersubjective dimension of implicature evaluation, since speakers don't judge reception correctness on the basis of whether the speaker has the state, but on whether they, the assessors, have the state.[2]

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[2] See Barker (2003, 2004) for discussion of the intersubjective dimension in various contexts.

Here's the problem for the multi-proposition hypothesis. If H judges U's utterance reception correct, then U and H agree about an utterance. But if **ID-even** is correct, we are left with a puzzle about what the common proposition is that U and H agree about. On the multi-proposition view, assuming (5) captures the content of the *even*-sentence, U utters the *even*-sentence encoding the proposition that she, U has such and such probability state, and H, agrees, but on the basis that she, H, has a subjective probability state. U and H are talking at cross-purposes, since there are two distinct propositions concerning probability:

<U's credence state assigns low probability to O's being F>
<H's credence state assigns low probability to O's being F>

What's the proposition about subjective probability that they agree on, when one speaker agrees with the other that even Granny got drunk?

One might propose that the illusive secondary proposition about probability is the proposition that both speaker and hearer have a certain subjective probability state. But what about a third speaker, S, who overhears the conversation, though is not included in it? S can agree, or disagree with the *even*-sentence produced, but that won't be on the basis that S thinks both parties have the probability state. Rather, again, in line with **ID-even** above, S will search their own bosom, to determine whether they have the subjective-probability state.

Another proposal about the probability in secondary propositional content—<Granny is extremely unlikely to get drunk>—unlikelihood is irreducible. It's neither objective probability nor subjective probability, but somehow between these two poles. This is certainly a position one might propose. For example, consider:

(6) It's surprising that Granny got drunk.

It doesn't seem unreasonable to hold that utterance of (6) is neither a report about some objective fact of surprisingness nor a report about a mere subjective state. That certainly seems to be correct. But it's nevertheless problematic, since how can we invoke without explication such putative forms of probability or surprisingness? Moreover, it leaves us with

a puzzle about the inter-subjective dimension (***ID-even***) as I have called it.[3] How does the fact that speakers consult their own subjective-probability states relate to judgements involving this supposed probability that is neither objective nor subjective?

Even if we could accept this kind of probability, I think the dual-proposition view still misrepresents implicature. The dual-propositional approach takes it as axiomatic that sentence content is propositional. So, although the implicature isn't part of the truth-conditions of the sentence (1), it still has propositional content. So, on this view, in saying (1), we say something true—that Granny got drunk—and something else true—that it's unlikely that she got drunk, even if this latter truth does not enter into the truth-conditions of the sentence in the way that the first proposition does. But I don't think that one is communicating a secondary truth with (1) *Even Granny got drunk*. For example, it's inappropriate to reply to utterance of (1) along these lines: *What you are saying is true. It's surprising she got drunk*. This misrepresents the mode of content delivery provided by implicature. But one could so respond to utterance of (4). In other words, (4) is not synonymous with (1).

*Pragmatic Presupposition*

Our attempts at reducing conventional implicature to semantic presupposition and to secondary propositional content have not worked.[4] What will work? One broad idea is that conventional implicature is *pragmatic presupposition* in Stalnaker's (1973) sense. On Stalnaker's view if a sentence $S$ carries a pragmatic presupposition $P$ then when $S$ is uttered speakers would normally expect to hold $P$ as common ground between discourse participants. We can allow that $P$ is an attitude, for example, a subjective probability state. So U in uttering *Even Granny got drunk* would normally expect her discourse participants to have a subject-probability state assigning low likelihood to Granny getting drunk. Stalnaker's view, however, leaves a puzzle about how the pragmatic presupposition functions as a mode of content. Suppose U utters *Even Granny got drunk*. Then it seems part of the conventional

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[3] Could relativism about reception correctness conditions help us with ***ID-even***? I think there are all sorts of problems with relativism in relation to phenomena like the intersubjective dimension—see Barker 2011a.

[4] I therefore cannot accept Copp's (2009) approach, which accepts Bach's framework of secondary propositions for his version of the implicature approach.

meaning is that she normally expects that her audience have the probability attitude. But is this part of the truth-conditional content of the utterance? Clearly we don't want it to be. The speaker is not asserting that normally speakers have such and such attitudes. So what kind of speech-act is the speaker producing in communicating the content that the attitudes are background? Stalnaker's approach doesn't tell us. Rather it presupposes some as yet untheorized speech act. I conclude that Stalnaker's approach fails because it conflates the state (of a conversation) in which propositions are held as uncontroversial with a mode of delivery of content that is non-truth-conditional and presuppositional. It's the latter we are seeking to understand, and not the former if we want to illuminate conventional implicature.

## 2. Implicature and the Essence of Assertion

I now want to turn to the view of implicature which I think works. This view provides an account of non-said content delivery through an account of assertion that clearly distinguishes asserting from implicating. In what follows I treat *implicating* as a speech-act, of a non-assertoric kind—I will often call it an *implicative act*. If so, in uttering an implicature-bearing sentences, like (1), in a self-standing illocutionary act, a speaker U performs a compound illocutionary act, containing two speech acts that are intimately connected but distinct. U performs two acts, in tandem: (i) an assertion, and *(ii)* an implicative act. Utterance of the whole sentence is an assertion, but also an implicative act, both performed simultaneously. So utterance of (1) has a dual speech-act purpose. There is (1) insofar as its produced in the assertion—denote that by *Even Granny got drunk*$^{ASS}$—and (1) insofar as it's produced in the implicative act— *Even Granny got drunk*$^{IMP}$. If so, (1) can be judged true or false, because it's used to make an assertion, but also judged felicitous or infelicitous, because it's used to perform an implicative act.

The task now is to distinguish illocutionary act of assertion from the illocutionary act of implicating. You might think that the usual accounts of assertion will distinguish assertion from implicating. But they fail to do so. Typically, people distinguish assertion as a belief-manifesting act, or one aimed at truth, or that act which is governed by the norm of

knowledge. But such approaches will not distinguish assertion from implicating. So they cannot be correct accounts of assertion.

Take knowledge. According to the knowledge norm, assertion is that act, governed by the norm: assert that P only if you know that P. It seems that knowledge can apply to implicature-bearing sentences. Take:

(7) Buggsy knows that even the best philosophical minds can get confused.

In (7), implicature comes within the scope of *knows-that*—there is no reason to think it doesn't. If so, implicature-bearing sentences can be known. Moreover, a case can be made that one should only produce *Even the best philosophical minds can get confused* in a self-standing act, if one knows that even the best philosophical minds can get confused. If so, a case can be made that implicature-bearing sentences conform to a norm of knowledge with respect to their production in illocutionary acts. But these acts are not assertions, so the knowledge-norm treatment of assertion cannot be right.

One might object that implicating cannot be governed by the norm of knowledge because implicatures are not propositional. Take an implicature-bearing sentence (1). Nothing propositional is communicated by (1) regarding the implicature—at least that's what I have argued. One might contend then that this is why implicating is not asserting. Assertions are displays of commitment to propositions, whereas implicative acts cannot be that, since there is no proposition to endorse.

This is all very well, but it just assumes the distinction between propositional versus non-propositional speech acts. And what's the ground of that distinction? For example, take the truth-apt sentence (8):

(8) It's very unlikely that Granny got drunk.

(8) presumably encodes a proposition, whereas *Even Granny got drunk*[IMP] doesn't. If we are really going to explain the difference between the two sentences, we need to give an account of the nature of the proposition in the case of (8). But as we saw above in examining the Back's multi-proposition view of implicature-bearing sentences, that's hard to do.

One might reply that truth-aptness is the answer. The sentence (8) is truth-apt—it's open to truth/false assessibility—whereas *Even Granny got drunk*<sup>IMP</sup> is not truth-apt. But what account of truth-aptness will deliver that result? I have argued elsewhere (2011b) that the usual accounts of truth-aptness, such a disciplined syntacticism, don't work in the context of languages with implicature.

*Brandom on Assertion*

What of Brandom's celebrated theory of assertion (1996)? Brandom attempts to carve out the assertions through the phenomenon of inference. For Brandom, assertion is a move in the game of giving and taking reasons, very roughly:

> 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.

However, Brandom's theory cannot deal with languages featuring implicature, since uttered implicature-bearing sentences meet both his conditions for assertions. Let's see how.

Implicative acts meet condition *(i)*. Suppose someone utters (1): *Even Granny got drunk*. It's obvious that one could be called upon to justify one's grounds for the implicature component. For example, one's audience might say: *Whaddaya mean, even Granny got drunk!* Their response is asking for justification with respect to the implicture. Implicating involves commitment, as does any speech-act. If so, one might be called in to justify that commitment. Condition *(i)* is met.

Condition *(ii)* of Brandom's approach involves inference. If one asserts, one issues that utterance as a potential premise in further arguments. But note now that implicature-bearing sentences can enter into inferential relations. For example, the piece of reasoning in (9) is fine and involves implicature:

> (9) Even Granny was drunk. If even Granny was drunk, it must have been a wild party. Therefore, it was a wild party.

*Even* plays a role in this inference. Remove *even* from the argument and one loses a sense of what's being conveyed. Compare:

(10) Granny was drunk. If Granny was drunk, it must have been a wild party.

Therefore, it was a wild party.

The difference is that (10) is open to interpretations not available to (9). For example (10) sustains the interpretation that the reason parties are wild if Granny gets drunk is that in her drunken state she commands that everyone smoke vast amounts of marijuana, generating general hilarity and high jinx, but non-alcoholic wildness. One cannot produce (9) in that context. *Even* then is doing work in the overall constraining interpretation of the ground for (9). I take that to mean it enters into inferential relations.

Implicating meets both Brandom's conditions *(i)* and *(ii)* for being an assertion. But implicating is not asserting. So Brandom has not isolated the essence of assertion.

*The Positive Proposal*

Nevertheless, we can take the spirit of Brandom's theory to forge an account that will distinguish asserting from implicating. My proposal is to shift the explanation from utterances to mental states. Consider again (8): *It's very unlikely that Granny got drunk*. (8) is a declarative sentence whose standard use is to make an assertion. It's a truth-apt sentence. But there is an intimate connection between (8) and (1), in particular, the implicature component of (1), *Even Granny got drunk*$^{\text{IMP}}$. Both involve the same mental state, a subjective probability with respect to Granny's getting drunk. In other words, exactly the same mental state, $\Pi$ can underpin an assertion and a distinct implicative act. So what makes for the difference between asserting and implicating? The difference is how the state $\Pi$ enters into the act. My proposal is this. In an assertion, the speaker's purpose is to manifest a *defensive stance* with respect to $\Pi$, and in an implicative act it's merely to manifest the state. Here's the core idea:

> ***Assert***: Assertion is a speech act comprising utterance of *S* with the purpose of manifesting a disposition to defend a mental state $\Pi$.
> ***Implicate***: Implicating is a speech act comprising utterance of *S* with the purpose of manifesting a state $\Pi$.

*Defense* means the speaker is disposed to indicate reasons for the state Π. Although any rational being with a state will have reasons for it—it will fit into a (relatively) rational array of mental structures involving other states—assertion is the act where the purpose of the act is to manifest a disposition to display reasons, the rational structure, in which the state embeds. By contrast, implicating involve the purpose of merely manifesting the state. It's this difference of *purpose* that is crucial to the difference between asserting and implicating.

Suppose a speaker produces an assertion, and so utters a sentence with the purpose of manifesting a disposition to defend possession of a mental state Π. Then, the audience in processing and accepting the utterance, has to reconstruct it in their own case, and recognize its purpose. In recognizing that the purpose is dialectical engagement, audience registers that that acceptance of Π is not being taken for granted, On the other hand, implicating is utterance whose purpose is merely expressing/manifesting Π. Although one may be called upon to provide reasons for the implicative speech act, this is not built into the purpose of the speech-act. The purpose isn't to defend the state Π. There is, in other words, no call to *dialectical arms*. If so, Π is being 'taken for granted' in that case. The proposed theory then explains why implicative acts are presuppositional, whereas assertions are not.

Although in implicating a speaker does not utter a sentence with the purpose of manifesting a defensive stance with respect to a state Π, implicature-bearing sentences can enter into inferences. Entering into inference is not constitutive, *pace* Brandom, of these sentences being asserted. Moreover, although, implicating involves no purpose of manifesting a dialectical stance, implicating is still open to the whaddaya-mean response— calling for justification. That's because implicating is still open to reception-correctness judgment because it involves commitment, like any speech act.

The defensive/non-defensive expression distinction explains implicating's presuppositional status. But what about non-truth-aptess? The sentence, (8) is truth-apt since it's associated with the production of an assertion. However, (1) taken in its implicative role, used merely to express a state Π, is non-truth-apt. But why is defensive-expression associated with truth-aptness, and non-defensive expression not? There is no deep

explanation here. Truth is just the reception correctness term for strings used in assertions. (More about that below.)

You might object to this account of truth-aptness in sentences because it links truth-aptness to assertion. What about unasserted sentences in logical compounds? They are unasserted, but can be truth-apt? When simple declarative sentences are embedded, they are not asserted, but they are still associated with assertion-types. It's their association with assertion-types that renders them truth-apt. So when we think of content, propositional, we really mean *assertion type*—Barker 2004. An implicature, the content of a sentence used in an implicative act, $S^{IMP}$, is an *implicative-type*. The content of $S^{IMP}$ is not propositional. An implicative-type is not an assertion-type. You cannot capture the content of an implicature content through a *that*-clause. That's why Bach's multi-proposition account of implicature-bearing sentences is untenable. It confuses two kinds of acts.

*Mental States Defended and Expressed*

Let's note that on the present account sentences don't inherit their truth-aptness from the states that are defensively expressed through utterance of those sentences. Subjective probability states are not truth-apt. Still, the sentence (8) is truth-apt. Its truth-aptness comes from its being associated with an assertion, a speech act whose essence is linked to the defensive expression of states.[5]

Although subjective probability states are not truth-apt they can nevertheless enter into relations of rationality. They can be grounded in evidence or sensory experience, and meet formal requirements. If so, one can have a defensive, reason-manifesting stance with respect to them. A general question at this point is whether this picture of truth-aptness and assertion generalises to all assertions. Should we analyse all assertion as acts of expressive defence with respect to mental states that are not in themselves truth-apt? This is the view that I have argued is indeed correct. Articulating and defending that goes beyond the bounds of this paper, and is not required as such to make the main claims presented here.[6]

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[5] See Barker 2007, but also 2011a. In the latter I argue that to make sense of faultless disagreement we have to think of assertion generally as expressive of pre-doxastic states.

[6] That's somewhat hand-waving, but look at Barker (2007b) for more details.

Both (1) and (8) can be believed. For example, one can believe that even Granny got drunk. So, we can say that utterance of (1) can be belief manifesting in that sense, and likewise with (8). So although these sentences involve expressing pre-doxastic states, nevertheless they are associated with beliefs. We shall look at the nature of belief states that makes sense of this idea below in §5.

*Pure Expressivism*

The account we have given of assertion is essentially expressivist. Take (8). (8) can be used to make assertions, but the state expressed is a non-doxastic state. This expressivism is nevertheless cognitivist, in that sentences like (8) are treated as truth-apt and belief manifesting, and not just in some minimalist way.

This pure expressivism allows us to make sense of the puzzle we had with reception-correctness and the intersubjective dimension, which we wrestled with in §1. Say H judges that U's production of an *even*-sentence is correct. What are U and H agreeing about according to **ID-even**? One answer is that they are agreeing about a speech-act type, one in which a speaker utters a sentence and defensively expressing some state $\Pi$ and non-defensively expressing a distinct, but related, subjectively probability state $\Sigma$. In short, the bearer of agreement is not a proposition in the sense of a representation of a state of affairs, but a speech-act kind identified by mental properties. In other words, it's a compound illocutionary act type of the kind we have characterized above. In saying that the sentence is correct, H is expressing her disposition to perform the corresponding speech-act.

The only way to make sense of that is through an expressivist treatment of correctness-claims:

> In uttering *S is correct*, U defensively expresses her disposition to produce *S* sincerely and clear-headedly.

In other words, statements of correctness defensively express dispositions to reissue utterances (judged to be correct). All of this goes to show that to make sense of conventional implicature we need some form of pure expressivism. Similar comments apply to the term *true*, as a predicate used in assessment of utterances. I leave details aside here.

*3. Interpretation and the Intersubjective Dimension*

That's the basic picture of conventional implicature and the kind of expressivist treatment that it seems to require. Conventional implicature, as a mode of non-propositional content requires a serious rethinking about the nature of assertion. So accepting conventional implicature at all is a serious business from the point of view of semantic foundations. Let's now return to IT, the conventional implicature theory of value-sentences.

According to IT, in producing an utterance of *O is good*, U asserts that O is *F*, and implicates approval of *F*'s being instantiated (in general). The property *F* predicated of O is the property in the associated moral attitude, or *F*-attitude. I will assume that *good* has distinct evaluative senses: moral, aesthetic, functional—as in *good hammer*, etc. The different evaluative senses are a function of the kinds of attitudes involved. A moral sense of *good*, presumably, is associated with attitudes about human conduct directed towards others.

These very general constraints on attitudes, however, will not fix in themselves any specific natural property *F*. So what does? What property *F* does the speaker's utterance come to pick out? One hypothesis is that what fixes a particular *F* is the specific *F*-attitudes of the speaker. Such a proposal would be an indexical theory, according to which each speaker's utterance of *O is good*, picks out the *F* whose instantiation the speaker approves of.[7] This cannot be correct. Consider the conversation:

> Schmidt: Hitler was good.
> Brown: Hitler was not good.

If the indexical approach were correct, then each speaker, given their distinct *F*-attitudes, would assign different properties *F* to good. Schmidt and Brown then would not be disagreeing with each other. They would be talking at cross-purposes. That would be a disaster for IT.

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[7] This is how Finlay 2005, Boisvert 2008, and Schroeder 2009, take the view.

An alternative is that the property $F$ is fixed by the audiences' attitudes. So Brown judges racist Schmidt's, *Hitler was good*, not in terms of Schmidt's twisted attitudes, approval of race supremacism, but her, Brown's, own approval of tolerance and anti-racism. Brown judges Schmidt's statement false, accordingly, since on this interpretation, Schmidt asserts that Hitler was tolerant and anti-racist. This interpretationist theory moves us from a speaker-centered indexicality to an audience/interpreter-centered indexicality. Although it improves the position of matters to some degree, it's still unattractive. What does *good* in the conversation refer to? One would have to answer that it's a relative matter. Relative to Schmidt qua audience of Brown's utterances, it refers to $F^S$, and relative to Brown qua audience of Schmidt's utterances it refers to $F^B$. But then, again, it makes it hard to see how Schmidt and Brown are having a real debate. Of course, one might respond that they are not really having a debate. That's par for the course, given the general assumption of expressivism. That's a kind of defeatism we want to avoid if possible.

This looks like a serious position for IT. Where do we go from here? The answer lies again in the intersubjective dimension. I suggest that in thinking of the reference of *good*, in the context of the implicature theory (and expressivism in general) we ought to move from considering the question, *What fixes the reference of the term 'good'* to *How does talk about the reference of 'good' work?*. That is similar to our move from asking *What does reception correctness consist in?* to *How do judgments of reception correctness work?*

In judging what a speaker is referring to with *good*, the speaker H appeals to their own $F$-attitudes. After all, these attitudes capture their conception of the good. So, H should use that conception to judge what people are referring to with *good* (whatever their attitudes are). Instead we are proposing:

> ***Ref-Exp***: H's judgment that *good* refers to $F$ is grounded in H's $F$-attitudes: in judging that U refers to $F^x$ with *good*, H expressively defends a disposition to use *good* with $F$-attitudes involving $F^x$.

This is not a theory of what conditions there are for *good* to refer to some $F$, but a theory of what lies behind the production of attributions of reference to a term, *good*. This is not a

speaker indexical theory or an audience indexical theory. It's not a theory of reference at all. It's a theory of reference talk.

Call this an expressivist treatment of reference. How does it help us? Consider Schmidt and Brown's exchange. Are they taking at cross-purposes? No. We, as observers of their debate, make our judgment about what they are referring to. Having broadly identified that *good* in their mouths involves expression of moral attitudes we then judge that they are referring to $F^{Us}$, based on our own conceptions of the good. $F^{Us}$ is the *F*-property fixed by our (moral) *F*-attitudes. This use-property of our utterances, the fact we have specific *F*-attitudes and they lie behind production of our utterances using *good,* does not fix the reference of our term *good*. We are not here in the realm of a theory of what *fixes* reference. Rather, the claim is this: our judgment that Schmidt and Smith refer to some natural property is nothing but a defensive expression of a disposition to use *good* with those *F*-attitudes. We judge that they are talking about goodness, qua, $F^{Us}$. That's what we take goodness to be. Indeed, we can assert: that's what goodness is. It's not a relative matter.

This approach requires that we now countenance the idea that speakers can express attitudes that in fact they don't have, from the point of view of what, psychologically speaking, their attitudes are. So, Schmidt's utterance is taken by us as using *good* to refer to tolerance and anti-racism, etc. Obviously, as a matter of psychology, Schmidt lacks any such *F*-attitudes. In short, expressing attitudes is not a psychological matter. Does this denude the implicature theory of any interest or empirical bite? I don't see why. It seems, on the contrary, what expressivism should be aiming for. As a kind of anti-subjectivism, expressivism seeks to separate value-utterance from any kind of autobiography.

Now, Schmidt might cotton onto the fact that he is being interpreted by us as picking out $F^{Us}$. Could he say that this is not what he means by *good*? He could. But that would just boil down to his saying that this is not what his conception of the good is. For example, Schmidt and Brown can engage in a debate about what goodness is. That is the same as a debate about what the term *good* really refers to. In short, the expressivist account of reference fits in with reference being an absolute matter. There is no place in the account for any relativism. The distinct *F*-attitudes that speakers have do not determine distinct

reference, just what we might call conceptions of the good. But the price we pay for this is that expressing an attitude ceases to be a psychological matter. This does not mean that it's a mysterious emergent property either. Just as our expressivist treatment of the reference of *good* requires that we cease thinking of *good*'s reference as a psychological property fixed by empirical attitudes of agents, given that *F*-attitudes move in tandem with the referent of *good*.

These proposals about reference attributions to *good* give rise to quite a few general philosophical questions. How does the expressivism about reference for *good* fit in with attributions of reference more generally? Is it part of a general expressivism about attribution of reference to predicates? I think it is—it's not attractive to suppose expressivism about reference merely applies to value predicates, though one might take this line. One might put forward a general case that in assigning reference to any predicate *F*, a speaker expresses a disposition to use *F* in a certain way. That *certain way* cannot be specified in terms that presuppose the reference of *F*. Rather, the certain way would have to be a use-property that involves capacities to interact with the environment, a differential sensitivity to entities in the world, but such facts of use would not amount to fixing reference.[8]

To illustrate the thought, take colour-predicates. An expressivism about reference would have to suppose that a capacity to use *red* is underpinned by, say, mental modules that react differentially to surfaces in the visible environment. But we don't have to suppose that these mental modules enabling one to use *red* together, given embedding in an environment, fix an extension. Maybe the mental machinery of humans simply cannot fix something as precise as that.[9] Still, distinct speakers largely agree in the module structures that underlie their uses of *red*. That explains stability and agreement in practice, including indecision about borderline cases. But an expressivist about reference does not have to say this similarity in underlying functional states fixes an extension of the term as used by that group. Nor do they have to say that it constitutes that fact that such and such speakers all mean the same by *red*. Rather, at best, the similarity of underlying functional states across certain

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[8] This view gets discussed, most recently, in some detail in Barker 2015.
[9] Epistemicists, who think that somehow, human cognitive systems are able to pick out utterly precise extension, are placing almost Olympian standards on human cognitive capacities.

groups of speakers explains why the meaning judgments of such speakers and their application of *red* to given surfaces tend to agree.

The expressivist about reference can still say that someone who sincerely claims that *red* as a word in a public language denotes yellowness betrays semantic confusion. We don't have to bring in conventions of language communities explicate the notion of semantic confusion or correctness. Rather the predicates, is semantically confused or is correctly using the term will themselves be predicates given expressive explication.

I don't think that the proposals about expressivism concerning *refers* in relation to value language necessarily require the sort of generalization I just sketched. Still, knowing that it's a possibility might support the specific local proposal about *good*, I have made.

Finally, the move we are making shows we need to be careful with the term *express*. There is a sense of *express* that holds of Schmidt insofar as he produces utterances whose antecedents are certain attitudes, *F*-attitudes directed towards $F^S$. But there is also a sense of *express* in which, (given our judgment) he expresses approval of $F^{US}$, based in the expressivist account of reference attribution. Call the first sense *express*$^{Prime}$ and the second *express*$^{Exp}$.[10] Both are important for understanding what's going on. When we analyse speech-acts—the underlying mechanisms of production of sentences—we are concerned with express$^{Prime}$. But from the point of view of reception by others, we are usually concerned with express$^{Exp}$. I will make the sense of express explicit when it's required in the discussion below.

## *4. Motivational Externalism*

I have argued that countenancing conventional implicature in a language requires adopting a cognitive expressivist treatment of assertion and a pure (non-hybrid) expressivism concerning certain locutions, such as the predicate *correct*—conveying reception correctness. It can be shown, easily enough, that we can deal with the so-called Frege-Geach embedding

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[10] One might say that we are being expressivist (in the sense of express$^{Prime}$) about expressing in the second sense. That's because claims like *Schmidt is expressing such and such attitude (which he psychologically lacks)* can only be understood in terms of an expressivist treatment of reference attribution. That expressivism about reference infects the expressivism about attributions of expressing attitudes.

problem using this framework. I have already indicated that sentences in embedded contexts are associated with speech-act types, both assertive and implicative. That provides the bedrock for explaining what underlies our judgments of validity of arguments featuring implicature-bearing sentences. I won't go into that here.[11]

Instead I shall consider another contentious issue affecting expressivism. Take the amoralist who lacks any of the feelings of approval or disapproval. Can they sincerely make moral claims? On a simple expressivist story, the problem is that if sincere moral assertion is to have moral beliefs, and having moral beliefs is, in the end about having desires, (motivational states) then, to really sincerely assert a speaker has to have moral desires, but that's what amoralists (psychopaths and so on) lack. There appears to be a serious issue for expressivism here.

One might attempt to circumvent the issue by denying that amoralists can make sincere value assertions. I don't want to consider this avenue here. Let's suppose that amoralists can make sincere assertions about what is good, right, required, and so on. Since the amoralist lacks internal mechanisms, attitudes, through which they can launch their own judgments, the amoralist must gain their moral beliefs from others through testimony. So how can the expressivist allow for amoralists who nevertheless, on the basis of testimony, make moral claims? This problem is not specific to hybrid theories, since hybrid expressivists have it too.[12] However, as I will now argue, the implicature theory, IT, has resources enabling it to deal with the amoralist, since, as we have seen, it can allow that desires are implicated by agents who lack the desires. We say above that Schmidt should be interpreted by us as implicating, and expressing attitudes, that, from a psychological point of view, he lacks. (This is *expressing*$^{\text{Exp}}$ sense—see §2 above.) Think then of the amoralist as analogous to Schmidt (from §3). The amoralist implicates *F*-attitudes that they lack. They lack them because they simply lack the psychological resources or inclinations to develop any such attitudes.

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[11] See Barker 2003, 2004, and 2007 for some details.
[12] Indeed, the amoralist is the reason that some cognitivists, like Finlay (2005) and Bar-On and Chrisman (2009).

To get a rich sense of what might be going on we need to turn to analogous cases in relation to conventional implicature operators, like *even*, where we shall see that comparable problems to the problem of the amoralist and the expressivist arise.

*Implicature, Subjective Probability, and Taste*

Consider the person, Robbo, who is told that even Timbo got drunk. Let's suppose that Robbo knows who Timbo is but has no posterior probability scale about the relative unlikeliness of Timbo getting drunk (compared with members in some contextually given class). Robbo doesn't know about Timbo's history, drinking tendencies, any statements he has made about the evils of alcohol, and so on, that is, the sort of information that typically would underlie a subjective probability state. Despite lacking such information, Robbo might come to believe his audience's claims. Robbo could say: *Jacko told me that even Timbo got drunk. I believe Jacko. So, it would seem, even Timbo got drunk.* Robbo's claim is not insincere or confused.

The same source of testimony that furnishes Robbo with the *even*-sentence, also furnishes him with a subjective-probability claim. Robbo can affirm *Timbo is unlikely to drink* based on testimony. Here again we can wonder, for the reasons already given, whether Robbo can have the subjective probability state supposedly expressed by sincere clear-headed utterance of *Timbo is unlikely to get drunk*. One might suppose that Robbo could have a credence state which, although lacking any evidential base, would be manifested through betting behavior. That is, as a result of the testimony, Robbo is disposed to accept odds of Timbo's getting drunk in accord with the a high degree of credence that he won't get drunk. But one might doubt that Robbo could feel informed enough to make a bet. For Robbo, there could be no estimation or weighing up of possibilities since he lacks evidence, that is, general information about Timbo.

You might object. Suppose Robbo is forced to bet on whether, at the next party, Timbo is likely to get drunk. Given that Robbo has been informed that it's very unlikely Timbo will get drunk, then surely the only rational course for Robbo is to accept very low odds on Timbo's inebriation. I am inclined to think Robbo should feel a bit queer about this. Robbo should think along these lines: *I have to make a bet. OK. How would I act if I really*

*had the subjective probability state that my informer Jacko (who really knows Timbo) has? I will bet like that: accept low odds. But I am not really accepting these odds as a reflection of my credence state. I am really only acting as a kind of proxy for Jacko. It's not really my gambling behaviour.*[13]

My claim is that although informed through testimony that even Timbo got drunk, Robbo really lacks the subjective probability state. Nevertheless, Robbo can sincerely and clear-headedly produce the implicature-bearing utterance. There are various locations that can be added to the utterances to indicate testimony-based status. Robbo might say *Apparently, even Timbo got drunk*, or *Timbo is very unlikely to drink, as I have been informed*, and so on. Robbo is not merely engaging in indirect discourse in adding such locutions. Robbo is committing herself to the correctness of the sentences.

It seems that speakers can sincerely and clear-headedly produce *Even O is F* or *It's unlikey that O is F* without possessing a subjective-probability state. We did say that speakers can produce utterances and express states they lack—Schmidt was a case of that. Still there is a problem. If speakers can produce these utterances without these states, what exactly is the link between these sentences and probability states? Why do we associate them at all with probability states? What exactly is the link? At least part of the issue here is what underpins the fact that they are being since and clear-headed. In other words, what mental states are the antecedents of the production of their sentences? We have been supposing that in uttering, sincerely and clear-headedly, in a self-standing illocutionary act *Even T is G* that a speaker is doing this—here the sense of express is express$^{\text{Prime}}$:

Defensively expresses Π—the state associated with *T is G*.

Non-defensively expresses a low subjective probability regarding (*T is F*)

But, if we are going to allow for testimony-based utterance, this cannot be right. If we are to retain expressivism, then we need another kind of state *X* that's expressed in the implicature component of such sentences. However, we cannot deny that *X*, whatever it is, whilst not

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[13] Does this mean the gambling behavior is a good measure of 'degrees of belief' when the subject actually has degrees of belief to be measured. The dispositions to gambling behavior do not constitute the credence states.

identical to a subjective probability state, is nevertheless somehow intimately related to a subjective probability state.

Here's the basic proposal—though it has to remain sketchy, for reasons of space. What speakers primarily express are states $X$ that have subjective probability states as their *canonical causes* (or outputs). Most of the time, speakers have both the canonical state $C$ and $X$. But sometimes speakers lack the canonical states, and gain $X$ via some other path. Testimony is one such path. What is this state $X$? The answer is that it's a functionally abstract state, defined by its inputs and outputs. But we are not supposing that it is a state that any folk psychological state can be identified with. It's not a belief, nor a desire. Here's at least part of its functional character of the pathway that underlies production of sentences:

**Canonical Input**

Unlikely [O is F]

**Token**[X] ⟶ Utterance $S$

Testimony-State
**Non-Canonical**
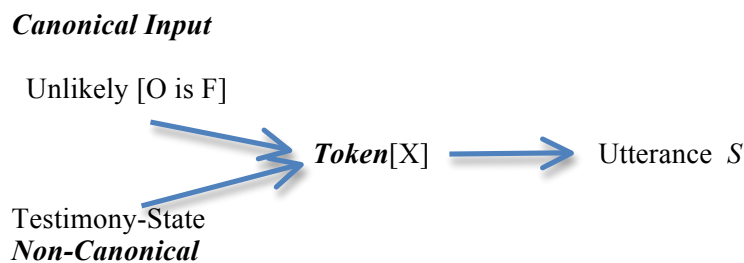
In other words, the full-blooded states are only canonical causes of the thinner, relatively functionally abstract state $X$. But $X$ is the proximal cause of utterances, which will be defensively or non-defensively expressed of them or non-defensive. That depends on what kind of speech act the speaker is going to generate with $S$.

We can suppose that such states, $X$ have a compositional character. The state corresponding to *Even O is F* might be structured in a way that reflects the grammatical structure of the sentence. It will have constituents. These structures are not meanings. They are part of what underlies the production of sentences. Expressivists, shouldn't say that the desire that is expressed by a moral utterance is it's meaning. But they want to say that central to the speech act of uttering the value-sentence is the desire.

This modification of the cognitive expressivist theory, in terms of the distinction between canonical causes and functionally abstract outputs of such canonical causes looks almost unavoidable if we are going to get a viable theory working at all. Take our expressivism about correctness claims. One way I can make a reception correctness claim is

actually being disposed to produce *S*. But that's not the only way. Another way is that I am told by someone that some utterance, which I may not have encountered, is correct. If so, we have to allow again, cognitive pathways, a state *X* that can be caused by a disposition to utter a sentence, but which might also be caused through a path of testimony, as when I am told that the first utterance made today is correct.

So how then do we deal with the amoralist? It should be clear, the amoralist is someone who acquires beliefs about the good, etc, through testimony—they have no other source for making such claims, since we are assuming lack of affect. However, that does not prevent their functional system's employing pathways of production that go through non-canonical routes. The amoralist is just like the person informed about subjective probability purely through testimony. Like Robbo's lack of real gambling behavior in relation to Timbo, the amoralist lacks motivation. Just as Robbo goes through the motions with placing bets, the amoralist might go through the motion of acting morally. But there is no real engagement. To conclude: IT is compatible with morally knowledgeable amoralists and motivational externalism.


## 5. Belief, Belief states, and Objects of Belief

We now come to the question of belief. It appears that there are beliefs about value, such that being nice to kids is a good thing. Moral utterances seem to express beliefs. Can the value expressivist accommodate this fact? Can the hybrid theorist accommodate it? Again, my strategy in this paper is to ask about implicature-bearing sentences and their relation to belief. We can approach that question by asking if implicature-bearing sentences can appear in the scope of *believe-that*? They apparently can, as in:

(11) Timbo believes that even Granny got drunk.

(12) Schmidt believes that even Elvis was famous

The implicatures may or may not *project* from such a position. To project is to become a commitment of the whole utterance.[14] So for example, (11) could be a case of projection. In that case, the belief attribution carries an implicature about subjective probability. Even if there is projection, it does not follow that the content of the attributed belief does not include the implicature. The implicature can still be part of the content of the belief. This is clearer in the case of (12). In this case there is no projection. (12) is a case in which the speaker is attributing an *infelicitous* belief to Schmidt. Schmidt has a weird belief. But we don't want to say it's a false belief. Rather its particular form of defectiveness is infelicity.

Beliefs can be true or false. But, on the picture developed here, they can also be infelicitous or felicitous. That kind of observation naturally leads to the idea that the objects of attitudes are utterance types, which (potentially) have truth-conditional and implicature content. In other words, beliefs are not, as such, *propositional attitudes*. In short, the objects of belief as utterance types and not propositions, understood as sets of worlds, or what have you.[15] Rather they are *speech-act type attitudes*. Such a view is not entirely unattractive, and certainly fits in with the earlier claims of this paper.

If that's right, what is the relation between believer and utterance type? What's the belief state? The obvious answer is: the belief state is being disposed to token, in a sincere and clear-headed way, the utterance type, whether that tokening is a private matter—a sentence in the head—or a public utterance. Let's consider the speaker who has access to canonical states for production of sentences. Take believing that *Even O is F*. This comprises—the sense of expressing is again express$^{Prime}$:

Disposition to defensively express $\Pi$.
Disposition to non-defensively express $\Sigma$.

Here $\Pi$ is the state associated with *O is F*, and $\Sigma$ a subjective probability state. Belief on this picture is irreducibly expressive. It's only at the level of expressive acts, or dispositions

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[14] For one there is the complicated issue of projection—see Langendoen and Harris 1971.
[15] Barker (2003, 2004, 2011b.) argues for a speech-act theoretic understanding meanings as speech-act types.

thereto, that one encounters belief. Prior to that, the underlying states have complicated functional natures, but they are not belief states.

So apply this kind of account to believing that *O* is good. The belief state is:

Disposition to defensively express Π.
Disposition to non-defensively express Δ.

Here Π is the state associated with *O is F*, and Δ an affect state. The states are coupled in that ultimately they are directed towards the same property *F*. On this view the value-belief is not a desire state, nor is it a pair of states, one of which is a desire. No, the coupled states are dispositions to expressive acts, one of which involves expression of affect. In this respect, the belief state for *O is good* is no less unified than the belief state for *Even O is F*.

However, some evaluative beliefs are even more *unified*. Take this belief:

(13) It's desirable that Fred leaves.

The sentence (13) involves the defensive expression of a certain affect state—desiring that Fred leaves. This assertion is a genuine, robust, truth-apt assertion, like any other in that respect. In this case the belief state is simple a disposition to defensively express the affect state. Again, we are not proposing that belief here is a desire. No belief is a desire. Rather belief, as always, is a disposition to a certain kind of expressive act. The desire enters into this disposition, but that doesn't make the disposition a desire.[16]

A more developed characterization of the theory being developed here would have to take into account what we have said about motivational externalism and the need for a distinction between canonical causes and functionally abstract states. But I have been leaving that aside at this stage. But the basic point should be obvious. The present approach is not saying that beliefs for the expressivist are desires or states that have desires as some conjunctive component.[17]

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[16] Nor is it a besire. We are not simply postulating that there are beliefs that are somehow desires. The belief state corresponding to (13) is not a desire, just internally connected to one.

[17] It's interesting to compare the framework being described here and the theories of what belief states are for a hybridist considered by Ridge (2009).

## *6. Pure Expressivism versus Hybrid*

I have tried to make a case for conventional implicature as a phenomenon, described some of the structures that I think are required to make sense of it, applied this framework to slurs and epithets and thin ethical terms—like *good*—basically following Barker 2000. Leaving aside the question of whether this framework is ultimately tenable, one salient issue needs to be briefly addressed. That's the role that a pure form of cognitivist expressivism plays in the account. We need this pure expressivism to make sense of conventional implicature, or so I have argued. But if we need pure expressivism, why not offer a pure cognitivist expressivism of thin value utterances, such as utterances of *O is good*? Why not indeed. It's here that a new debate can begin. Indeed, a range of possible ways of understanding value-sentences become available. The simplest would be to say that a claim *O is good* is simply a defensive expression of an affect state (or the canonical output of such a state.) That is it's very much like kind of assertion produced in uttering sentences like (13). Given the cognitive expressivism sketched here, such utterances would be entirely truth-apt, and belief manifesting. No need for conventional implicature and hybidism. It could be that in the end, although we can make sense of hybridism—it's a tenable view—it's made redundant by the very machinery that clears a space for it.[18]

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