

## Bivalence and What Is Said

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### ABSTRACT

On standard versions of supervaluationism, truth is equated with supertruth, and does not satisfy bivalence: some truth-bearers are neither true nor false. In this paper I want to confront a well-known worry about this, recently put by Wright as follows: ‘The downside . . . rightly emphasized by Williamson . . . is the implicit surrender of the T-scheme’. I will argue that such a cost is not high: independently motivated philosophical distinctions support the surrender of the T-scheme, and suggest acceptable approximations.

According to a well-known way of tracing the semantics/pragmatics distinction (a version of what Recanati (2004) calls ‘minimalism’) semantic theories ascribe to expressions meanings that are as close as possible to what relevant linguistic conventions settle. This guiding thought has led several writers, including Salmon (1991) and Bach (1994) to distinguish two notions of ‘what is said’, only in one of which is an immediate semantic concern to characterize what sentences say. In the pragmatic sense, saying is a speech act – roughly, the one done by default with declarative sentences – and *what is said* is its intentional object; in the semantic sense, saying is conveying conventionally encoded meanings. In this paper, I will argue for the importance of this distinction by putting it to use in a relatively virgin field. I want to argue that an influential argument against supervaluationist accounts of truth-value gaps fallaciously ignores that distinction.

Supervaluationists hold that truth-value gaps originate – at least in some cases – in semantic underspecification or indecision; they appeal to supervaluationist model-theoretic techniques to provide a semantics compatible with the validity of classical logical truths and entailments such as instances of excluded middle.<sup>1</sup> On standard versions, truth is equated with supertruth – truth in all admissible classical valuations – and does not satisfy bivalence: some truth-bearers are neither true nor false.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, in the empty-names application of the supervaluationist techniques the main goal is to account for an intuitively correct distribution of

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<sup>1</sup> Van Fraassen (1966) introduced the supervaluationist techniques to provide a semantics for free logic. Fine 1975 is the classical exposition of its application to vagueness.

<sup>2</sup> Keefe (2000, ch. 6–7) articulates reasons for preferring this version to less standard ones like McGee & McLaughlin (1995).

truth-values for utterances (2)–(4), made under the reference-fixing stipulation (1), so that, while (2) ends up being neither true nor false, (3) and (4) can still be true.

- (1) Let us give the name ‘Vulcan’ to the unique planet causing perturbations in Mercury’s orbit.
- (2) Vulcan is bigger than Mars.
- (3) Either Vulcan is bigger than Mars or Vulcan is not bigger than Mars.
- (4) Vulcan causes perturbations in Mercury’s orbit, if it exists.

To provide a second illustration, closer to issues of vagueness, consider the following example by Sorensen (2000, 180). The stipulation (5) is made by explorers before traveling up the river Enigma; after they finally reach the first pair of river branches, they name one branch ‘Sumo’ and the other ‘Wilt’. Sumo is shorter but more voluminous than Wilt, which make them borderline cases of ‘tributary’. A supervaluationist diagnostic allows us then to count (6) as neither true nor false, while still counting (7) as true:

- (5) Let us give the name ‘Acme’ to the first tributary of the river Enigma.
- (6) Acme is Sumo.
- (7) Either Acme is Sumo or Acme is Wilt.

There is a well-known worry with the crucial feature of supervaluationism, its rejection of bivalence, recently voiced by Wright (2004, 88) as follows: ‘The wide reception of supervaluational semantics for vague discourse is no doubt owing to its promise to conserve classical logic in territory that looks inhospitable to it. The downside, of course, rightly emphasized by Williamson and others, is the implicit surrender of the T-scheme. In my own view, that is already too high a cost’. I will argue that such a cost is not at all high: the independently motivated distinction between two senses of what is said supports the required surrender of the T-scheme, and suggests acceptable approximations.<sup>3</sup>

The paper has the following structure. In the first section, I present a simple version of the argument by Williamson that Wright has in mind in the previous quotation, and argue that it unacceptably relies on an unexplicated, pretheoretical notion of *what is said*. In the second section, I briefly sketch recent debates about how to trace the semantic-pragmatics divide, so as to make a preliminary distinction between *what is asserted* and *what is expressed*. In the third section, I introduce on that basis the distinction that, I contend, a theoretically informed discussion of arguments such as Williamson’s require, between (as I will put it) o(bjective)-assertion and d(iagonal)-assertion – for present purposes, the names

<sup>3</sup> Keefe (2000, 213–220) indeed propounds abandoning the T-scheme. She relies on the fact that, on the most natural conception of validity for the supervaluationist (preservation of what he takes to be truth, i.e. supertruth) an argument-schema version still holds, arguing that this is all that is needed. I will argue that a corresponding sentential schema also holds.

are merely suggestive. What is d-asserted in, say, (7) is well-modelled by supervaluationist semantics such as Fine's 1975. In the final section, I put the distinction to use to rebut a new argument against supervaluationism by Andjelkovic and Williamson (2000) that, I will argue, also relies on unacceptably playing with pre-theoretical notions of what is said.

### 1. Williamson's earlier argument

I cautiously spoke before of *truth-bearers*. In a forceful version of the argument to which Wright refers, Williamson (1994, 162–4; 187–98) relies on a formulation of bivalence and the T-scheme for utterances; in recent more sophisticated arguments that I will also discuss, Andjelkovic and Williamson (2000) formulate them for sentences-in-context instead.<sup>4</sup> The arguments involve two schemes, one for truth and another for falsehood, and a related characterization of bivalence. Here are the more recent versions I will be considering ((T), (F) and (B)), together with the earlier ones ((T'), (F') and (B')),

- (T)  $\forall s \forall c \forall P [\text{Say}(s, c, P) \supset [\text{True}(s, c) \equiv P]]$   
 (F)  $\forall s \forall c \forall P [\text{Say}(s, c, P) \supset [\text{False}(s, c) \equiv \sim P]]$   
 (B)  $\forall s \forall c \forall P [\text{Say}(s, c, P) \supset [\sim \text{True}(s, c) \equiv \text{False}(s, c)]]$   
 (T') If an utterance  $u$  says that  $P$ , then  $u$  is true iff  $P$   
 (F') If an utterance  $u$  says that  $P$ , then  $u$  is false iff not  $P$   
 (B') If an utterance  $u$  says that  $P$ , then either  $u$  is true or  $u$  is false

The conditionalized truth-schemes (T) and (T') differ from the standard disquotational one, **True 'P'  $\equiv$  P**, famously discussed by Tarski (1944). Andjelkovic and Williamson (2000, 216) argue that '(T) is more basic than the disquotational biconditional; it explains both the successes and the failures of the latter.' Three kinds of cases are mentioned in support. Firstly, context dependence ('we are Europeans') constitutes a problem for the traditional version, but not for (T). Secondly, the liar paradox 'merely falsifies the antecedent **Say**(( $\sim$ **True**( $s, c$ ),  $c$ ,  $\sim$ **True**( $s, c$ ))' (216). Finally, '[t]he principle [of Bivalence] should not imply that non-declarative sentences are true or false, for presumably they are not intended to say that something is the case. For the same reason, the principle does not imply that a declarative sentence is true or false if it does not say that something is the case' (217–8). Williamson (1994, 187–198) mentions similar considerations in support of (T').

Truth bearers are in all these versions linguistic items. This is Williamson's (1994) reason for it: 'Bivalence is often formulated with respect to the object of

<sup>4</sup> The new formulations use a primitive notion of quantification into sentence-position; see Andjelkovic & Williamson 2000, 216–7.

the saying, a proposition (statement, . . .). The principle then reads: every proposition is either true or false. However, on this reading it does not bear very directly on problems of vagueness. A philosopher might endorse bivalence for propositions, while treating vagueness as the failure of an utterance to express a unique proposition. On this view, a vague utterance in a borderline case expresses some true propositions and some false ones (a form of supervaluationism might result). [. . .] The problem of vagueness is a problem about the classification of utterances. To debate a form of bivalence in which the truth-bearers are propositions is to miss the point of the controversy' (Williamson 1994, 187).<sup>5</sup>

Williamson's (1994) earlier argument considers (T'), (F') and (B'), and goes roughly as follows. Take any utterance that allegedly invalidates bivalence, like one of 'TW is thin', assuming TW to be a borderline case of thinness. Now, from the relevant instance of excluded middle, which the supervaluationist accepts, plus (T') and (F'), we get (B'), the relevant instance of the principle of bivalence. Thus, the supervaluationist must reject (T') or (F'), or both. Williamson then challenges him to provide an acceptable motivation for that rejection: 'The rationale for (T') and (F') is simple. Given that an utterance says that TW is thin, what it takes for it to be true is just for TW to be thin, and what it takes for it to be false is for TW not to be thin. No more and no less is required. To put the condition for truth and falsity any higher or lower would be to misconceive the nature of truth and falsity' (1994, 190). Williamson's main point thus depends on intuitions about what utterances (or sentences in context) *say*, and the effect of this on their truth-conditions.

It is this challenge that I want to confront in what follows. My main consideration in response will in effect substantiate McGee and McLaughlin's (2004, 129) warning, that the 'phrase 'Utterance *u* means [says] that *p*' is one of the most treacherous in philosophy.'<sup>6</sup> I will distinguish two importantly distinct notions of *saying* and *what is said*; I will call them 'what is expressed' and 'what is asserted'. These are not the only senses of those ordinary notions with an intuitive basis; there are others, even others theoretically relevant for some legitimate theoretical concerns. But distinguishing *what is expressed* from *what is asserted* is crucially

<sup>5</sup> Actually, as Williamson (1999, first section) in fact concedes in his reply to Schiffer (1999, first section), nothing important hangs on whether we take as truth-bearers linguistic items or rather *contents*, potential objects of states of knowing and ignoring. If we take the latter option, the debate would then be about whether contents satisfy bivalence. If so, the argument I will present below purports to establish that, in the relevant cases, there are no (determinate) (o-)contents – corresponding to one of the senses of *saying* that I will distinguish – for truth-evaluation; while there are other (d-)contents – corresponding to the other sense – collectively constituted by a plurality of precise propositions (as in the proposal Williamson contemplates here) and because of that they may not satisfy bivalence.

<sup>6</sup> McGee and McLaughlin discuss versions of (T') and (F') with 'means that' instead of 'says that'.

important in the context of this debate; for it is sometimes one, sometimes the other that satisfy Williamson's platitudinous-sounding claims.

It will help, I think, if – before going into needed details – I provide an intuitive presentation of the view to be put forward. Imagine the previous platitudinous quote from Williamson uttered with either (2) or (6) replacing 'TW is thin'. I want to make two claims about these cases. The first is one about their effect on intuitions: far from sounding platitudinous, now they just appear puzzling. The second claim is that a theoretical account of the cases along the previously sketched lines explains the puzzlement. I want to say, firstly, that there is something that utterances (2)–(4), (6)–(7) say, i.e. *express*; on my proposal, moreover, what is expressed may be truth-evaluable, and in fact what (3), (4) and (7) express is true.<sup>7</sup> But, secondly, both (2) and (6) say, i.e., *assert* nothing, for lack of reference in the former case and for underdetermination of reference in the other, and thus the utterances are neither true nor false relative to what they signify; and it is the truth or falsity of what is asserted that is most germane to our intuitions concerning truth values.

On the outlined view, the puzzlement we feel when considering these versions of Williamson's challenge is due to the fact that while, on the one hand, in its most natural sense the uniqueness implicit in phrases such as 'what it takes for *u* to be true' is not satisfied in them – for lack of reference in one case and underdetermination in the other –, on the other hand we feel that something is definitely said. Although that further item is truth-evaluable in its own terms, as I will argue, it is a highly theoretical entity, relatively far away from ordinary intuitions and difficult to pinpoint without substantial theoretical background.

My argument will thus depend on a philosophical elucidation of the intuitive notion of *what is said*. The details of any such elucidation will be controversial; I am sure that the particular view I am prepared to defend will be unappealing to many, including friends of supervaluationism. I am in no position to provide a fully satisfactory account, and providing it here is in any case out of the question. However, I do not think I need anything like that.

I emphasized before that Williamson's challenge ultimately appeals to intuitions about what is said and its effects on truth. This will also be seen to be the case concerning the other arguments against supervaluationism to be considered later. To dispose of them, it is enough if I show that such reliance on intuition is not legitimate; and it suffices for that if I show that *in order to use it for any serious theoretical purpose*, (a) the intuitive notion of what is said must be split into at least two different relevant notions, and (b) on at least a theoretically well-motivated way of explaining them, congenial to supervaluationism, we can

<sup>7</sup> Strictly speaking, on the view that I will put forward it is not expressed items that are truth-evaluable, but rather items related to them in ways that I will outline.

account for the intuitive appeal that Williamson's contentions have, while ultimately rejecting the support that they seem to provide for (T') and (F'), or (T) and (F), and thus for (B') and (B) and against supervaluationism's rejection of bivalence. That should be enough to move the debate from appeals to intuitions to theoretically informed arguments.<sup>8</sup> A sufficiently elaborated theoretical account is needed to motivate this, but it does not matter if it should be ultimately rejected in its particulars.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. *Two notions of what is said*

I move now to the first stage in my elaboration of the suggestion just made for dealing with these arguments, by distinguishing two philosophically important senses of *saying*. I will argue that Williamson's challenge and the more recent one by Andjelkovic and Williamson I will be examining in the final section can be met by elaborating on something that, as we will see, they grant, that the present issues should only be discussed relative to theoretical notions of *saying*. Mainly by appealing to considerations that can be found in the recent literature on the semantics/pragmatics divide, I want to make the following distinction. On the one hand, *saying* is a generic term for a speech act, the one made by default by uttering a declarative sentence, and *what is said* relative to this notion of saying is, for any particular utterance of a sentence S, a proposition which is an intentional content of such a speech act as close as possible to being made fully explicit in (the logical form of) S; i.e. – thinking of propositions as structured – a proposition whose constituents correspond to items in the logical form of S, given by the context in accordance with the standing meaning of those items. On the other hand, *saying* is just conveying conventionally encoded information, and what is said relative to this notion of saying is the conveyed content. For the sake of disambiguation, I will use 'what is asserted' for the first, and 'what is expressed' for the second; but the reader should remember that assertion is only a paradigm species of *saying* in the first sense – swearing, conjecturing, accepting are others among many.

<sup>8</sup> Liar cases could be used to make the same point, as already indicated by Ebbs 2001, 310–2 – a paper to which someone in the audience in a presentation of this material led me; my points below in the main text hopefully develop Ebbs'. If we replace 'TW is thin' with a Liar sentence in Williamson's little argument, the result, at the level of ordinary intuitions, would be either perplexity, or perhaps a plain contradiction. The sense of 'saying' in which Liar cases merely falsify the antecedent of (T') *must be a theoretically elaborated one*. It is thus open to the supervaluationist to argue that, on any such theoretically elaborated notion, Williamson's arguments from (T') and (F') to (B') does not go through, as in fact I will do in what follows. And thus the burden of proof is transferred to Williamson.

<sup>9</sup> Williamson's arguments have thus the merit of forcing supervaluationist to offer accounts of what is said congenial to their views, which is badly overdue.

I will provide later some more elaboration of the intended distinction, but perhaps the following may help at this point. I assume that the declarative mood of a whole sentence semantically indicates that, by default, i.e. unless conditions in an open-ended list obtain, an assertion is made; similarly, the semantic properties of the expressions in the logical form of the sentence put constraints on the content asserted in the default case, relating to specific features of the context in the case of the context-dependent ones. In the default case, if the context is proper and has the required features, the utterance asserts the content that I am calling 'what is asserted'. This at the same time typically goes beyond and falls shorter of what the semantic properties of the linguistic units in the uttered logical form provide. It goes beyond at the very least in that typically context essentially contributes to it. It falls shorter at the very least in that some conventionally indicated meanings do not go into what is asserted, including Gricean conventional implicatures and presuppositions conventionally associated to units or phrases in the sentence.

In some non-default cases (reference failure, irony, fiction), nothing is (o-)asserted in my sense *by the utterance*.<sup>10</sup> However, in these as in all cases, something is *expressed*, because this just results from the fact that the utterance is the rational act of instantiating expressions with certain linguistic properties by a competent speaker. Strictly speaking, what is expressed is not propositional; however, it determines propositional contents (*diagonal* contents) that the speaker might intend to assert. Thus, when a writer of fiction uses declarative sentences in putting forward his story, contents are expressed; nothing is asserted in my privileged sense; but the author might well be asserting some contents. Similar points apply to cases of irony and understatement, malapropism and other forms of inadvertent speech.

I cannot provide here an argument for the distinction, other than that it allows us to properly understand the issues discussed in this paper. Instead, I will rely in this section on the anecdotal evidence provided by recent discussions of the semantics/pragmatics divide in which the distinction surfaces. The notion of *what is said* is the hinge on which contemporary debates about the nature of semantic theories turn; those theories are supposed to ascribe expressions features compositionally determining what is literally said in uttering sentences containing them – while pragmatics accounts for the mechanisms by means of which more indirect meanings are conveyed. The notion has an intuitive basis; we make ascriptions of what utterances and their utterers say, and have intuitions on the conditions under which they are correct. This appears to support a certain

<sup>10</sup> Although, as I will presently emphasize, *the speaker* may well assert something, or something might be *d-asserted*; I am sorry if this is confusing



intuitive constraint on the deliverances of acceptable semantic theories, which Cappelen and Lepore (1997, 278) call ‘MA’ and state thus: *an adequate semantic theory T for a language L should assign p as the semantic content of a sentence S in L iff in uttering S a speaker says p*. They then go on to criticize this particular constraint on the deliverances of correct semantic theories, by pointing out the intuitive correctness of reports of what is said like those in the following examples:

- (8) (Professor H, asked whether Alice passed her exam, I didn’t fail any students.  
Professor H said that Alice passed her exam.
- (9) A: Frank slapped John very hard in the face.  
A said that Frank slapped John in the face.
- (10) A (having no idea who the winner is, The winner of the lottery will be heavily taxed.  
(To a knowledgeable audience, A said that Smith will be heavily taxed.
- (11) A (having no idea where Salta is, John is going to Salta.  
A said that John is going to Argentina.

(9) illustrates a point that, as we will see, Andjelkovic and Williamson (2000) appreciate, that in some cases ascriptions of what is said report mere entailments. The other examples show that our ascription practices are even more convoluted. In some other cases reports ascribe as said conversational implicatures, as in (8); or they are more sensitive to the context of the ascription, as in (10) and (11), than that of the reported speech.

This is not to accept Cappelen and Lepore’s skepticism (which they implausibly intend as a defense of Davidsonian truth-conditional semantics from challenges that it does not capture what is said). I agree with Richard’s (1998) reply, that what he calls the ‘received view’, RV, is not touched by their examples. To phrase it in a way that I find congenial, RV is the claim that *an adequate semantic theory T for a language L should assign p as the semantic content of a declarative sentence S in L iff in a literal utterance u S explicitly just says p*. Later I will indicate in what way my proposals help to flesh this out; but any proper theoretical account should start by acknowledging the ambiguity stated at the beginning of this section, noted among others by Kent Bach. Bach distinguishes two different notions of what is said implicit in Grice’s conception, which he thinks can be usefully explicated by appealing to ‘Austin’s distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts. Austin, it may be recalled, defined the locutionary act . . . as using certain ‘vocables with a certain sense and reference’ [. . .] That sounds a lot like Grice’s notion of saying, except that for Grice saying something entails meaning it: the verb ‘say’, as Grice uses it, does not mark a level distinct from that marked by such illocutionary verbs as ‘state’ and tell’, but rather functions



as a generic illocutionary verb that describes any constative act whose content is made explicit' (1994, 143).<sup>11</sup>

Bach proposes to amend Grice, avoiding some intuitively odd aspects of his views: 'There was one respect in which Grice's favored sense of 'say' was a bit stipulative. For him saying something entails meaning it. This is why he used the locution 'making as if to say' to describe irony, metaphor, etc., since in these cases one does not mean what one appears to be saying. Here he seems to have conflated saying with stating. It is most natural to describe these as cases of saying one thing and meaning something else instead [. . .] Besides non-literality, there are two other reasons for denying that saying something entails meaning it. A speaker can mean one thing but unintentionally say something else, owing to a slip of the tongue, a misuse of a word, or otherwise misspeaking. Also, one can say something without meaning anything at all, as in cases of translating, reciting [. . .] So we can replace Grice's idiosyncratic distinction between saying and merely making as if to say with the distinction (in indicative cases) between explicitly stating and saying (in Austin's locutionary sense)' (Bach 2001, 17). My own distinction between *what is asserted* and *what is expressed* departs from Bach's between stative and locutionary saying.

Part of the case for the distinction comes from Grice's *conventional implicatures*. Consider (12),

- (12) Even John could prove the Completeness Theorem.  
 (i) John could prove the Completeness Theorem.  
 (ii) It is comparatively improbable that John could prove the Completeness Theorem.

Grice (1989, 121; *ibid.*, 361) maintained that, in his favored sense of 'say', (12) *says* that (i) while it does not say, but merely *indicates*, that (ii); as a result, utterances such as (12) can be correctly counted as true, even if what corresponds for them to (ii) is false, as for instance in 'Even Gödel could prove the Completeness Theorem'. Utterances such as this should be classified as somehow inappropriate or infelicitous, rather than false. In support, Grice mentions considerations of theoretical utility, without elaborating on them. The sort of defense of his view that I will be outlining certainly depends fundamentally on theoretical considerations. However, we should keep in mind that at the core of such a defense lie very robust intuitions shared by competent speakers, of English and of other

<sup>11</sup> Ziff (1972, 712) also notices the two senses in our ordinary ways of speaking. After distinguishing a notion (in fact, several ones) of what is said in which interrogative sentences say (one, he suggests, such that two utterances of 'I am tired' by different speakers might be counted as saying *the same thing*), Ziff mentions a different sense which one can ascribe 'only if in uttering the utterance the speaker made some sort of statement or assertion or the like; the utterance must be in declarative form'.

languages that also present the phenomenon. I have in mind intuitions concerning the correctness conditions of assertions such as (12) vis-à-vis, say, assertions of a conjunction of (i) and (ii). While it is intuitively clear that, in the Gödel case, the latter would be a false assertion, we are intuitively unclear about how to classify the former.<sup>12</sup>

In a recent paper, Barker (2003) defends the Gricean view, which he interestingly uses to object to theories of meaning that seek to reduce linguistic meaning to truth-conditions, and also to deflationary accounts of truth. He wants to argue, with Grice, that while (i) is what is said by (12), and thus what determines its truth-condition, not just (i), but also (ii) is part of (12)'s *semantic content*, 'the content it possesses by virtue of linguistic rules and context, and upon which logical particles may potentially operate' (Barker 2003, 2). He provides in my view convincing evidence for the latter claim, the semantic embeddability of what is indicated, or conventionally implicated, as part of the content to which some operators are sensitive (Barker 2003, 8–13). In previous work I myself have argued that, while referential expressions such as indexicals and proper names contribute their referents to the content asserted in utterances of simple subject-predicate declarative sentences where they occur – as direct-reference theorists contend –, some reference-fixing descriptive material contribute to merely indicated conventional implicatures, and thus to semantic content, against the most radical tenets of those theorists.<sup>13</sup> Part of my argument was the traditional Fregean one that those contents can be semantically embeddable under indirect discourse operators.

Failure to notice the distinction that I am making, however, mars Barker's discussion. In my terms, the Gricean view that Barker wants to defend is one

<sup>12</sup> This is not to say that these intuitions by themselves justify the Gricean view, or the form of it I will be endorsing. As Stalnaker (1973, 454) puts it concerning the Gödel case: 'I do not think that any of us have very clear intuitions about the truth values of statements which have false presuppositions, and so I do not think that the truth value, or lack of it, of such statements can be data against which to test competing generalizations.' Von Stechow 2004 and Glanzberg 2005 suggest alternative, more reliable intuitive tests for the distinction between what is signified and what is presupposed.

<sup>13</sup> García-Carpintero 2000. Following Stalnaker's (1974, 1978, 2002) considerations, I analyze there the relevant Gricean conventional implicatures – merely indicated but nonetheless semantic contents – as *pragmatic* presuppositions, as opposed to *semantic* presuppositions (requirements for the truth of the sentence encoding it and its negation). The relevant contents are semantic (part of what is expressed), given my views about the semantic-pragmatics divide, in that they are part of the conventional meaning of some expressions, in that they account for the felt validity for some inferences, in that they embed under some operators, and so on. But they should be analyzed in terms of the pragmatic notion of *what speakers believe to be part of the common ground they accept*, as argued by Stalnaker, because such an explication is appropriately more flexible. It allows that in some cases (perhaps (5) is one of them) the fact that the indicated content fails to obtain is compatible with the truth or falsity of the utterance; while in some other cases (say, cases of failure of identifying conditions for referents) this is not so. The view also allows for a theoretically more satisfactory account of presupposition projection, and for there being a form of presupposition cancellation.

about *what is asserted*. In order to defend it, Barker feels compelled to discredit Bach (1999) arguments that conventional implicatures are part of what is said. Once our distinction is made, however, the apparent inconsistency between Barker's and Bach's views is easily seen to be at most terminological. For Bach (1999) does not argue that conventional implicatures are part of *what is asserted*. On the contrary, he adopts here the same line we have seen him suggesting in previous work: 'intuitions about what is said tend to conflate what is said with what is asserted, which may include less than the full propositional content of the utterance. What is asserted is the content of an illocutionary act, not the locutionary act of saying. What is said comprises the full content of the locutionary act (the semantic content of the utterance), but that may include more than what intuitively is taken to be asserted' (Bach 1999, 344, fn).

Bach in fact provides a semantic embeddability argument, essentially analogous to Barker's, for his view that conventional implicatures are part of what is said; his main argument for that view in the paper is one of that very sort, based on the specific case of the indirect discourse 'says' operator. Bach appeals to what he calls 'IQ test' (Bach 1999, 338–343), which shows that in some context ascriptions of what is said with, say, (12) embedded are not intuitively equivalent to corresponding ascriptions with (i) embedded instead. Thus, not only is there no substantive contradiction between Bach and Barker, in fact there is agreement between them. What Bach calls 'what is asserted' corresponds to what I am calling in the same way, and thus to what Barker counts as what is said, in accordance with Grice's favored sense; Bach agrees that it does not include conventional implicatures. What Bach calls 'what is said', on the other hand, corresponds (even if only roughly) to my *what is expressed*, and to what Barker counts as semantic content; and both agree that it includes conventional implicatures, for more or less similar reasons.

I have argued so far for the distinction between what is expressed and what is asserted in that there are aspects of the former that are not part of the latter, aspects that there are good reasons to count in the domain of semantic theories. The opposite may also be the case, as recent debates confronting what Recanati (2004) calls 'contextualists' and 'minimalists' about stock examples like 'I have had breakfast' or 'every bottle is empty' show. Arguably, what is asserted may well be constituted in part by extra-linguistic, extra-semantic features, even if it is semantically constrained. I would argue that the objects contributed by directly referential expressions like indexicals and proper names according to Kaplan's and Kripke's views are not part of what is expressed, but only of what is asserted.<sup>14</sup>

For these reasons, we cannot simply think of what is expressed in an utterance of a sentence as an ordered pair consisting of a type of illocutionary force and a

<sup>14</sup> See García-Carpintero 2006a.

type of content, the content being what is asserted with that utterance. Things cannot be so simple, firstly because, in addition to the content associated with the main illocutionary force (*saying* or *asserting* in such a case), there could be further contents (Grice's indicated or conventionally implicated contents) presented in the utterance with a different force, say, *presupposing* or *accepting as part of the common ground*; but also because the contents associated in what is expressed with the main illocutionary force need not do more than merely constrain the actually asserted truth-evaluable contents.

This raises a problem, pointed out by King and Stanley (2005). What is expressed should be compositionally determined; i.e. there should be an account of how features contributed by lexical items and relevant syntactic modes of combination give rise to, at the very least, the content associated with the main illocutionary force in what is expressed, and probably also the presupposed contents. This is a non-negotiable feature of what semantics is about. However, it may not seem obvious how to specify expressed contents so as to satisfy that requirement. Now, as I said I am not in a position to provide a general proposal here; but I hope it will be sufficient for present purposes if I rely on a well-known theory, sufficiently close for present purposes to what I take to be correct. On the view I countenance, what is expressed by, say, an utterance of 'I am hungry' would consist in: any semantically encoded presuppositions, in particular that, given a context *c*, the referent of 'I' is the speaker of *c*; a general, character-like characterization of the illocutionary force of declarative sentences;<sup>15</sup> and a Kaplanian character for the sentence, a function *f* such that, for any context *c*, *f*(*c*) is the singular content consisting of the value of the character of 'I' applied to *c* and the value of the character of 'being hungry' applied to *c*.<sup>16</sup> What is expressed by an utterance (what a semantic theory would deliver for it) is in sum well-represented either by a full-fledged two-dimensional 'propositional concept', such as those envisaged by Stalnaker (1978), or by the 'constant, but complicated semantic values' contemplated by Lewis (1980). As I said before, although this is non-propositional in nature, as Stalnaker emphasizes it determines a propositional content, what he calls a *diagonal* content.

Let us take stock. As Cappelen and Lepore's examples along the lines of (8)–(11) before show, the view that intuitions about what is said and ascriptions thereof should constrain semantic theorizing must be handled with care; only after careful theoretical prodding can those intuitions be relied upon. We have seen in the

<sup>15</sup> García-Carpintero 2004 suggests that this should be a characterization of the default case, which would be a knowledge-transmission constitutive norm.

<sup>16</sup> King and Stanley (2005, 128) consider a proposal along these lines for what is said in the semantically salient sense, and disregard it mainly on the basis that there is no job for it to do additional to roles already served by a simpler proposal they suggest. This paper in effect provides for a reply, by outlining such a job. García-Carpintero 2006b develops this point.

previous paragraphs that this is so not only because in some cases ascriptions of what is said report conversational implicatures, as in (8); or mere entailments, as in (9); or because they are oversensitive to the context of the ascription, as in (10) and (11). More relevant for the would-be defender of Richard's RV (in my own construal, that *an adequate semantic theory T for a language L should assign p as the semantic content of an declarative sentence S in L iff in a literal utterance u S explicitly just says p*), this is because our intuitions are sensitive to two different notions, *what is expressed* and *what is asserted*. What is expressed is what is conventionally and systematically encoded, what is determined by the linguistic meaning of the expressions in the utterance and their mode of combination. What is asserted is what the utterer of a literal declarative sentence makes fully explicit, the item – say, the obtaining of a state of affairs – the speaker is assertorically committed to.<sup>17</sup>

It is clear that, of the two concepts we have distinguished, it is what is asserted that better corresponds to Williamson's notion of *what is said*; for, as Andjelkovic and Williamson say in a quotation I gave before, '[t]he principle [of Bivalence] should not imply that non-declarative sentences are true or false, for presumably they are not intended to say that something is the case. For the same reason, the principle does not imply that a declarative sentence is true or false if it does not say that something is the case' (Andjelkovic & Williamson 2000, 217–8). Utterances of non-declarative sentences express contents, but intuitively truth and falsity are properties only of declarative utterances. Now, I grant to Williamson that a sufficiently precise theoretical notion of what is asserted can be recovered from our intuitions and indirect reports; and I also agree on its importance for semantic theorizing. Our semantic intuitions about what is asserted are much more reliable than our intuitions about what is expressed. Given that what is asserted should be at least constrained, if not fully given, by what is expressed, proposals about what is asserted are a crucial empirical element in theorizing about what is expressed. However, I agree with Bach that it is what is expressed that semantic theories ultimately purport to characterize, on a systematic compositional basis on the well-supported assumption that some form of compositionality holds for it.

### 3. *Supervaluationism and what is said*

With this sketchy motivation for the preliminary distinction between *what is expressed* and *what is asserted*, let us now go back to elaborate on the intuitive

<sup>17</sup> The phrase 'in the assertoric mode' is intended to distinguish the commitment that the speaker takes to what is asserted, from the one s/he commits himself to with respect to merely presupposed contents. García-Carpintero 2004 elaborates on this by arguing that in the former but not in the latter case there is a commitment to putting the audience in a position to acquire knowledge.

diagnosis I gave before for the (2)–(4) and (6)–(7) cases. Our most straightforward intuitions about truth or falsity concern what is asserted. However, on a view that at least appears well motivated on the basis of familiar contemporary semantic considerations, (2)–(4) assert nothing (in my technical sense of ‘what is asserted’, I should insist) for lack of referent, while (6)–(7) assert nothing for overabundance of candidate-referents. This notwithstanding, there is something that these utterances express. Moreover (and this is what is crucial for our purposes), there are good reasons to take what each of them express *to determine a truth-evaluable content*. For, given the assumptions (1) and (5), there is an intuitive sense in which (3), (4) and (7) are true, indeed a priori true; and we can uphold those intuitions relative to contents derivable from what is expressed.

Contemporary ‘two-dimensional’ accounts of the Kripkean cases of the contingent a priori and the necessary a posteriori help us to motivate the elaboration I will presently provide of the *prima facie* conflicting intuitions described in the previous paragraph. On such a view, for instance, the fact that an utterance like (14), made in the context of the stipulation (13), is contingent but a priori is to be explicated in that it can be taken to mean both a contingent singular content and a necessary descriptive one (a ‘diagonal proposition,’ determined by what is expressed,

(13) Let us call ‘Neptune’ the unique planet causing perturbations in Uranus’s orbit.

(14) Neptune causes perturbations in Uranus’s orbit, if it exists.

Without going into the details, the diagonal proposition corresponding to a given utterance *u* obtains in a possible world *w* just in case *u* occurs in *w*, what it expresses there, its purely semantic properties, coincides with what it expresses in actuality, and what it thereby signifies obtains in *w*.<sup>18</sup>

This two-dimensionalist view on the contingent a priori is similar to the one put forward by Donnellan (1979). Cases of failure of reference like our previous ‘Vulcan’ and ‘Acme’ examples suggest a consideration for such a view additional to those given by Donnellan. Anybody who – like Jeshion (2001) – wants to defend that it is the very singular content asserted by (14) that is both contingent and a priori faces a problem. On the two-dimensionalist view, what is a priori is not an object-dependent content, but rather a descriptive, sort-of-metalinguistic proposition; hence, there still is a *truth* corresponding to (3) and (4) that can be known a priori. The defender of Jeshion’s view will have to envisage true but gappy propositions. This would require a semantics technically attainable, but theoretically in need of a justification not at all easy to provide.

<sup>18</sup> See García-Carpintero 2006a for elaboration. I generalize there Kaplan’s framework, so that proper names as much as indexicals have a token-reflexive descriptive character, which goes into determining the relevant diagonal propositions.

The theorist in question must envisage a free logic, and justify the truth-conditions that such a logic ascribes to referential sentences.<sup>19</sup> Semantics for free logics should justify the non-validity of rules like, say, existential generalization, and at the same time the truth of utterances like (3) and (4). A bivalent proposal like Burge's (1974) achieves this by stipulating that all atomic sentences are false; however, as Lehmann (2002, 226) notes, Burge's justification for the stipulation presupposes bivalence, which is at stake once we envisage non-referring terms. Non-bivalent supervaluationist semantics are among the most popular, but they confront a similar problem. Lehmann rightly criticizes a proposal by Bencivenga based on a 'counterfactual theory of truth': 'Why should truth, which is ordinarily regarded as *correspondence to fact*, be reckoned in terms of what is *contrary to fact*? Why should we reckon that 'Pegasus is Pegasus' is true because it *would be true* if, *contrary to fact*, 'Pegasus' did refer?' (Lehmann 2002, 233), concluding, 'If supervaluations make sense in free logic, I believe we do not yet know why' (*ibid.*)<sup>20</sup>

The proposal I am going to make for the sort of cases we are interested in is related, but it disregards the modal concerns prominent in most discussions of two-dimensionalism. A full-fledged account should take them into consideration, providing sufficient detail about the interrelation of the issues of indeterminacy we are confronting and modal matters. I am in no position to do that here, but, as I have repeatedly stressed, I do not think I should. I want to reply to Williamson's argument by indicating that there are two different notions of saying in vagueness cases, giving rise to two different sets of truth-conditions. I have invoked two-dimensionalism because it is, at the very least, a well-motivated proposal along similar lines. If two-dimensionalists are right, there are two different contents that utterances like (14) could say, *what is asserted* and something else, closer to *what is expressed*; and these two notions are not just theoretical artifacts, they have semantic, epistemological and psychological reality in that they properly account for relevant intuitions.

Let me introduce at this point two more useful pieces of jargon. Assertion (*saying*, in Grice's privileged *illocutionary* or *stative* sense, according to Bach's elucidation) is a generic speech act in which the literal speaker commits himself to the truth of a content, as close as possible to being made explicit by the words

<sup>19</sup> See Lehmann 2002 for a useful discussion of free logics.

<sup>20</sup> Two-dimensional accounts such as the one envisaged below for indeterminate cases provide in my view the required philosophical foundation for supervaluationist semantics for free-logics; I develop this in 'Two-dimensionalism and Free Logic', ms. I deal there with what, as Lehman correctly points out, is the main problem for the counterfactual explanation, to wit, to sanction the distinctive feature of a free logic, that sentences correctly formalized as  $\exists x(x = a)$ , including 'Vulcan exists', might be untrue. If we just appeal to Bencivenga's counterfactual characterization, or, for that matter, to the rough description of diagonal propositions I gave three paragraphs back, this does not seem to be the case.



he uses, with the help of context when the language appeals to it. According to two-dimensional view such as Stalnaker's (1978) – or, for that matter, Lewis's (1980), because their important theoretical differences are irrelevant for present concerns – the semantic content of utterances such as (14) (what is expressed, in my sense) embodies an alternative content, to which the intuition that something trivial or a priori is put forward in them are sensitive. According to Stalnaker's (1978), these additional contents given by the semantics are in fact the ones that the speaker wants to convey, or assertorically commit himself to, in Kripke's 'necessary a posteriori' related cases. However, these do not count as *what is asserted*, in the technical sense that I have introduced, because of their relative indirectness (their lack of Grice's (1989, 359–60) 'dictiveness'); they are merely 'indirect' or 'implicated' 'assertions'. Let me use 'c(orr)spondence)-contents' for what is asserted in cases such as (14), in the previous sense: the content of the assertion made by default in uttering them, given their compositional semantics and contextual features, and let me use 'c-assertion' and derivatives for these acts; in contrast, I will use 'd(iagonal)-contents', together with 'd-assertion' and derivatives, for the other cases.<sup>21</sup>

From this two-dimensionalist-inspired perspective, Williamson's appeal to the intuitive link between what is said and truth in the argument presented in the first section is misguided, and can be shown to be so on the basis of three related considerations: firstly, the fact of our confused intuitions about formally analogous cases; secondly, a theoretical account of the confusion that reveals two notions of saying at play; thirdly, an account of truth related to one of the notions compatible with the supervaluationist account that Williamson is criticizing. It would be more theoretically satisfactory if my proposal and two-dimensional accounts of modal matters were not just analogous, but deeply theoretically related; and it is my view that, at the end of the day, they will be shown to be so. But for present purposes I do not need a fully-fledged account along those lines.

So, let us say that a (precisification-)-context  $c_p$  is a *well-behaved relevant alternative* to the actual context  $c$  were sentence  $s$  is uttered ( $c_p \approx c$ ) if and only if:  $s$  is uttered in  $c_p$ ; conditions obtain in  $c_p$  for  $s$  to express in  $c_p$  what it expresses in  $c$  (the relevant linguistic conventions are in place, etc.);  $c_p$  satisfies in addition whatever contextual presuppositions (about speaker intentions, descriptive-fixing conditions, and so on) might be imposed; compatibly with that, expressions in  $s$  have the semantic values they are expected to have when they are formalized in classical logic: there is in  $c_p$  a domain of quantification, expressions properly

<sup>21</sup> The term 'correspondence' is ultimately intended descriptively, because I think that a proper elucidation of the correspondence intuition about truth should appeal to c-assertions and c-contents; but this is another point I cannot elaborate here, it will not play any crucial argumentative role in what follows, and thus the reader should take the term as a mere convenient part of a proper name for present concerns.

formalized as constants denote objects in it, predicates divide the domain into two exhaustive classes.<sup>22</sup> For present purposes, *what is c-asserted* (*c-content*) by, say, utterances including referential expressions can be taken as a Kaplanian singular proposition; in cases (2)–(4) and (6)–(7) nothing would be c-asserted, for the reasons we have indicated. However, we can countenance an alternative candidate to a truth-evaluable content, germane to some of our intuitions about the present cases, which (to mark the analogy with two-dimensional views) I will call *what is d-asserted* or *d-content*. This is a ‘diagonal’ content determined by what is expressed; if we schematically abbreviate *what is c-asserted* as ‘S<sub>c</sub>’ and *what is d-asserted* as ‘S<sub>d</sub>’, we can characterize the truth-conditions for what is d-asserted by having recourse to a non-disquotational of truth for d-contents, ‘True’, relying on the more usual disquotational one, ‘True<sub>d</sub>’, as follows:

$$(TS_d) \quad \forall s \forall c \forall P [S_d(s, c, P) \supset [\text{True}(s, c) \equiv \forall c_p \forall Q [(c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, Q)) \supset \text{True}_d(s, c_p)]]$$

The proposal is that, in accordance with (TS<sub>d</sub>), supervaluationist semantics models the truth-conditions corresponding to what is d-asserted by (3), (4) and (7) – a generalization over admissible valuations; with respect to that, they will count as (super-)true. With respect to what is d-asserted, (2) and (6) on the other hand are neither true nor false; thus, for the latter case, there is a relevant c<sub>p</sub> for which we can correctly instantiate ‘P’ in (TS<sub>d</sub>) with ‘Sumo is Sumo’, obtaining a true instance for the right-hand side; but there is another one for which a correct instance would be the false ‘Wilt is Sumo’.<sup>23</sup>

The following gloss might help. On Donnellan’s view on cases of the contingent a priori such as (14), what is c-asserted cannot be known a priori; just understanding that would involve being in a relation with a material object whose obtaining would disqualify one’s justification for knowing the relevant content from being a priori. However, even putting aside whether or not one understands (and on what justificatory basis) what is c-asserted, one might be in a position to know a priori some other, related general content; to wit, that whatever the utterance c-asserts, what it c-asserts is true. Now, I think that Donnellan was wrong in identifying what is known a priori in those cases; there is more substantive, non-metalinguistic knowledge that better fits that role. But the general idea is correct; putting aside whether or not one knows what is c-asserted (if anything at all is), and on what justificatory basis, what speakers know a priori, essentially

<sup>22</sup> To deal with empty names, we should replace this with the provisions of an appropriate semantics for a free logic, but we can put this aside for the sake of simplicity here.

<sup>23</sup> The analogy with two-dimensional proposals on modal matters, and the examples we have considered might erroneously suggest that d-contents, as required by the two-dimensional account of the contingent a priori, are always not just true but necessarily so. But this is not the case. Sorensen considers ‘Acme is brackish’ which, under the present proposal, should have a true but still contingent d-content. As I warned, the proposal should be elaborated to include modal considerations, something that I cannot pursue here.

thanks to their knowledge of language, is some general content to the effect that whatever is c-asserted in those cases obtains. I am suggesting that supervaluationist have available an analogous reply to Williamson's challenge: their apparatus of admissible valuations models real *said* contents, closer to what semantics provides, which determine non-bivalent truth-conditions.

As I have admitted before, a proper elaboration of these suggestions cannot be pursued here. In addition to matters in need of elaboration already pointed out, I am aware that I have not even discussed proper instances of vagueness; (5)–(7) are at most related cases. I should also defend that it is d-asserted contents that are at stake when we deal with the intuitive manifestations of vagueness: the sorites, the appearance of borderline cases and the appearance of 'tolerance' (in Crispin Wright's terms) or 'boundarylessness' (in Mark Sainsbury's); for I am prepared to accept that, in some contexts, utterances of vague sentences c-assert true contents, while I would reject epistemicism as a general solution.<sup>24</sup>

However, I think the preceding considerations suffice for the supervaluationist to withstand his view concerning the disquotational schemes against Williamson's challenge. On a supervaluationist proposal based on our distinction, what is expressed by 'TW is thin' determine contents collectively representing several states of affairs, corresponding to the admissible sharpenings.<sup>25</sup> By taking them into consideration, putting aside what actual utterances may c-assert, we satisfy the two main motivations for the account. On the one hand, 'to conserve classical logic in territory that looks inhospitable to it'; i.e. to preserve the intuitions of 'penumbral connections', in particular in the case of logical truths such as instances of excluded middle – for which we must somehow envisage classical valuations. On the other hand, to account for borderline cases, and to defuse the sorites – which requires us to ascribe vague expressions not just one classical extension, but several.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> For instance, in a context in which, discussing cartoons characters most of which lack any hair, 'bald' might well have a cut-off point between people with zero and one hair. (I owe the example to my colleague Mario Gómez.) Glanzberg's (2004) views, to which I am very sympathetic, are in my view tainted by missing the distinction between what is c-asserted and what is d-asserted, for it is the latter which is at stake in vagueness. Lacking this distinction, Glanzberg is committed to a contextualized form of epistemicism (vague predicates, as used in particular utterances, have unknown cut-off points), which I find as unwarranted as any form of this view of vagueness.

<sup>25</sup> I say 'collectively' to prevent spurious criticisms of supervaluationism such as the one by Fodor and Lepore (1996). The reader might have the related worry that, given how widespread vagueness is, what I have defined as assertion properly speaking (c-assertion) occurs not very frequently, if ever. My reply (which would be part of an elaboration of the suggestions made by the choice of the term 'correspondence') would be that, even if ideal, cases of c-assertion play a conceptually fundamental role.

<sup>26</sup> The relevant ascriptions would also be vague, given the phenomenon of higher-order vagueness, which I am ignoring here to avoid further complications.

We have seen that in its intuitively most accessible sense the truth-conditions of utterances depend on what they assert. On the supervaluationist proposal, however, it is contents determined by what is expressed that account for our intuitive judgments regarding (3), (4) and (7). Truth or falsity is collectively determined by the different ordinary contents they could assert under different circumstances – by whether they all obtain, or they all fail to obtain. This provides a theoretical rationale for rejecting simple-looking schemes such as (T) and (F), (T') and (F'). For the cases at stake, only schemes embodying (TS<sub>d</sub>) are acceptable:

$$(T_d) \quad \forall s \forall c \forall P [S_d(s, c, P) \supset [\text{True}(s, c) \equiv \forall Q [\forall c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, Q) \supset \text{True}_d(s, c_p)]]]$$

$$(F_d) \quad \forall s \forall c \forall P [S_d(s, c, P) \supset [\text{False}(s, c) \equiv \forall Q [\forall c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, Q) \supset \text{True}_d(\sim s, c_p)]]]$$

Compatibly with this, it is open to the supervaluationist to contend that vague utterances express, and indeed d-assert, just one thing. We can thus dismiss Williamson's (1994) challenge. Although an utterance of 'TW is thin' d-asserts just one thing, it is the global evaluation of what it may c-assert under different circumstances that is relevant to determine its truth-value. The matter can only be decided after the issue has thus been theoretically clarified. It is not philosophically pertinent to request that it be decided on the basis of how plausible Williamson's intuitive claims relating what is said and truth sound, because in relevantly related cases (the 'Vulcan' and 'Acme' cases) only confusion results.

#### 4. Andjelkovic and Williamson's new argument

I will conclude by examining in this final section Andjelkovic and Williamson's (2000) recent more sophisticated argument. I take it that they in effect accept a reply to the original argument along lines somehow related to the previous one. They motivate it on different grounds than considerations on the nature of what is said; and this is relevant for evaluating their new anti-supervaluationist argument. They suggest that supervaluationists could object that principles like (T) and (F) can hardly be taken as implicit definitions of **True** and **False**, for 'in one respect they are too weak [. . .]; in another respect they are too strong' (Andjelkovic & Williamson 2000, 224). They are too weak in that, implausibly, it is compatible with them that things that do not say (mountains, say) have both properties. More worrying, they are too strong in that they entail 'a principle of uniformity to the effect (at least in the classical context) that everything said by a given sentence in a given context has the same truth-value' (225), (U,

$$(U) \quad \forall s \forall c \forall P \forall Q [\text{Say}(s, c, P) \ \& \ \text{Say}(s, c, Q) \supset [P \equiv Q]]$$

But then, the supervaluationist ‘might reject (U), and therefore both (T) and (F), on the grounds that (U) fails in borderline cases for a vague sentence *s*. Perhaps they will suggest that a vague sentence says many things, corresponding to its different possible sharpenings; in a borderline case, some of these things differ from others in truth-value, contrary to (U)’ (Andjelkovic & Williamson 2000, 226). On behalf of the supervaluationist, Andjelkovic and Williamson propose (T\*) and (F\*) as better candidates to implicitly define **True** and **False**:

$$(T^*) \quad \forall s \forall c [\text{True}(s,c) \equiv \exists P [\text{Say}(s,c,P) \ \& \ \forall Q [\text{Say}(s,c,Q) \supset Q]]]$$

$$(F^*) \quad \forall s \forall c [\text{False}(s,c) \equiv \exists P [\text{Say}(s,c,P) \ \& \ \forall Q [\text{Say}(s,c,Q) \supset \sim Q]]]$$

Andjelkovic and Williamson (2000, 230–5) then provide two arguments for (U), and thus for the original schemes (T) and (F). They now acknowledge that the case for them cannot be allowed to rest solely on an appeal to intuitions on apparently platitudinous claims involving ‘say’, introducing instead a semi-technical notion: ‘There is a non-technical notion of saying on which to say something can also be to say some of its immediate logical consequences [. . .] That notion of saying is clearly irrelevant to the present problem, for it would yield counterexamples to (U) even in unproblematic, non-borderline cases [. . .] Thus we should interpret **Say(s,c,P)** in (T), (F) and (U) to mean something like: *s* says in *c* just that *P*. But then how can (U) fail? If, in a given context, a sentence says just that *P* and says just that *Q*, how could the proposition that *P* be anything other than the proposition that *Q*? Similarly, if we read **Say(s,c,P)** as something like ‘The propositional content of *s* is that *P*’, then the uniqueness implied by the definite article leaves no obvious room for (U) to fail’ (230–1).

In support of this – this is their first argument – they consider a case somehow analogous to the ‘Acme’ example, an utterance of ‘the die is cast’ intended to make both a literal claim about a die, and a metaphorical one about a decision. They argue that, in their privileged semi-technical sense, just one thing is said – the conjunction of the two propositions. They are aware that this could be disputed, perhaps by probing intuitions concerning other examples; this is what I would do, appealing to the ‘Acme’ case. ‘Fortunately, the uniformity principle (U) can be supported by arguments more rigorous than the foregoing remarks’ (233), they say, and they go on to provide the second argument.

The argument ‘assumes that sentences *s* and *t* can be connected by a material biconditional into a sentence EST ( $\equiv$  is the material biconditional in the meta-language)’ (*ibid.*). Given that assumption, they introduce two premises, (E1) and (E2), and show that, together with (T\*), they entail (U):

$$(E1) \quad \forall s \forall t \forall c \forall P \forall Q [\text{Say}(s,c,P) \ \& \ \text{Say}(t,c,Q) \supset \text{Say}(\text{Est},c,P \equiv Q)]$$

$$(E2) \quad \forall s \forall c \forall P [\text{Say}(s,c,P) \supset \text{True}(\text{Ess},c)]$$

- (i)  $\forall s \forall c \forall P \forall Q [\text{Say}(s, c, P) \ \& \ \text{Say}(s, c, Q) \supset \text{Say}(\text{Ess}, c, P \equiv Q)]$  (from (E1))
- (ii)  $\forall s \forall c \forall P \forall Q [\text{Say}(\text{Ess}, c, P \equiv Q) \supset [\text{True}(\text{Ess}, c) \supset [P \equiv Q]]]$  (from (T\*))
- (iii)  $\forall s \forall c \forall P \forall Q [\text{Say}(s, c, P) \ \& \ \text{Say}(s, c, Q) \supset [\text{True}(\text{Ess}, c) \supset [P \equiv Q]]]$  (from (i) & (ii))

Now (E2) allows us to discharge the condition **True(Ess, c)** from (iii), thus deriving (U). ‘Although (T\*) and (F\*) appear to invite a supervaluationist treatment of vagueness, they do not really do so. Such a treatment would involve a denial of (U). The foregoing argument shows that that in turn would require the supervaluationist to deny (E1). But that is too high a price to pay, for it destroys our conception of what biconditionals say’ (Andjelkovic & Williamson 2000, 234).

In reply, note first that (T\*) and (F\*) are not good representations of the alternative truth-schemes that the proposal (TS<sub>d</sub>) for the truth-conditions of d-asserted contents I have made in the previous section suggests, (T<sub>d</sub>) and (F<sub>d</sub>). What I have defended is that the speaker of any utterance of a declarative sentence can be taken to assertorically commit himself to, in addition to c-contents, d-contents closer to what they express. It is not that they ‘say’ many different things; they say just one thing, relative to which their truth-conditions are more complex. (T\*<sub>d</sub>) and (F\*<sub>d</sub>) are schemes more consonant with (T<sub>d</sub>) and (F<sub>d</sub>) than (T\*) and (F\*), and (U<sub>d</sub>) is the version of the uniformity principle that the supervaluationist should resist:

$$(T^*_d) \quad \forall s \forall c [\text{True}(s, c) \equiv \exists P [\exists c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, P) \ \& \ \forall Q [\forall c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, Q) \supset \text{True}_d(s, c_p)]]]]$$

$$(F^*_d) \quad \forall s \forall c [\text{False}(s, c) \equiv \exists P [\exists c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, P) \ \& \ \forall Q [\forall c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, Q) \supset \text{True}_d(\sim s, c_p)]]]]$$

$$(U_d) \quad \forall s \forall c \forall P \forall Q [\exists c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, P) \ \& \ \exists c_{p'} \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_{p'}, Q) \supset [P \equiv Q]]$$

If we now wanted to modify Andjelkovic & Williamson’s ‘more rigorous’ argument for the uniformity principle, to show that (T\*<sub>d</sub>) and (F\*<sub>d</sub>) already commit the supervaluationist to (U<sub>d</sub>), we would need correspondingly modified versions of their two premises. As far as I can see, only something like (E1<sub>d</sub>) and (E2<sub>d</sub>) could work:

$$(E1_d) \quad \forall s \forall t \forall c \forall P \forall Q [\exists c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, P) \ \& \ \exists c_{p'} \approx c \ \& \ S_c(t, c_{p'}, Q) \supset \exists c_p'' \approx c \ \& \ S_c(\text{Est}, c_p'', P \equiv Q)]$$

$$(E2_d) \quad \forall s \forall c \forall P [\exists c_p \approx c \ \& \ S_c(s, c_p, P) \supset \text{True}_d(\text{Ess}, c)]$$

(E<sub>d</sub>) is clearly acceptable: with respect to any precisification-context, an utterance consisting of the material equivalence of a sentence and itself must be true. This is a sort of penumbral connection, determined by our practice of (*ceteris paribus*) using in one and the same context expressions of the same type with the same semantic value – i.e. as anaphorically related, in an extended sense of ‘anaphoric’.<sup>27</sup> But, precisely because of this, (E<sub>1</sub>) is unacceptable; we immediately realize this, in view of the preceding point, when we appreciate that the variables *s* and *t* might take the very same value. Now, this shows that we should reject Andjelkovic & Williamson’s (E1), which, as we saw, according to them ‘is too high a price to pay, for it destroys our conception of what biconditionals say’. To appreciate whether this is so, the reader should confront his intuitions regarding (15) and (16) – uttered under the conditions stipulated by Sorensen for his example:

(15) Acme is Sumo if and only if Acme is not Wilt.

(16) Acme is Sumo if and only if Acme is Sumo.

We are now sensitive to the existence of at least two relevant notions of what is said (truth-evaluable contents, possible objects of assertoric acts), what is c-asserted and what is d-asserted. The intuitions to which Andjelkovic and Williamson appeal might well be in order when the former is considered, but we should find them wanting when it is the latter which is at stake. The reader should just realize that it is compatible with the view that ‘Acme is Sumo’ does not assert (c-assert) anything true or false, that nonetheless (15) and (16) say something true. Anybody sharing these (at the very least sensible, I take it) intuitions would reject (E<sub>1</sub>), which would make them wrong; and a view such as the one I have developed here makes sense of these intuitions. In effect, the appeal to ‘our conception of what biconditionals say’, as much as Williamson’s original argument, puts too much weight on intuitions too shaky to properly sustain what is demanded from them.\*

<sup>27</sup> The ‘penumbral connections’ at stake are more complex than people usually think. In my view, what ‘Acme is identical to itself’ d-asserts is (super-) true, but what ‘Acme is identical to Acme’ d-asserts is neither true nor false, because I take it that it is in principle permissible in some well-behaved contexts to use tokens of the same proper name relative to different naming conventions. Utterances of ‘that river is identical to itself’ and ‘that river is identical to that river’ also illustrate the point.

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