Abstract

Theory of Meaning: Sense, Force, Tone and Truth

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This thesis examines Michael Dummett's form of a theory of meaning for natural language. I argue that Dummett's extension of Frege's formal techniques to the semantics of natural language, based on the categories of sense, force and tone, and the centrality of truth, provides an inadequate theoretical account of linguistic competence.

Part One examines the celebrated sense-force distinction. Dummett's schematic model of force-indicators and sentence-radicals ignores or mishandles semantic features of numerous ordinary expressions and linguistic forms. In many cases the distinction is blurred, and worse, univocity is sacrificed. A chief culprit is the restrictive nature of true-false polarity. The principal thesis that force attaches only to complete sentences is compromised, and Dummett's handling of force-indication fails to account for the distinct elements of word-order, verbal mood and intonation contour.

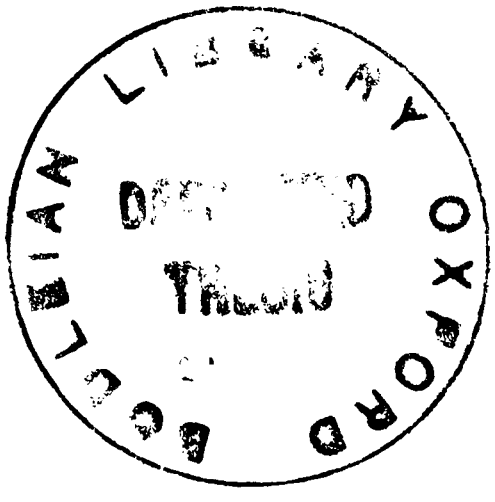
In Part Two I attempt to distinguish genuine varieties of tone, inspecting the different differences among e.g., 'lift'-'elevator', 'cheekbone'-'zygoma', 'ere'-'before', 'Chinese'-'Chink', 'and'-'but' and others, as well as the contribution of adverbs like 'still' and 'almost'. Both Frege and Dummett consign to this general category many expressions which do not belong; for some other cases, tonality is a matter of use, but not meaning. Minimally, the sense-tone boundary needs redrawing. More accurately, the notion of sense, identified with the determination of truth-conditions, must either be broadened to incorporate some non-truth-conditional aspects of word-meaning, or else be replaced by another term possessing the broader role.

In Part Three a single general characterization of meaning is advanced which accommodates both individual expressions and linguistic forms. I support the idea that a formulation in terms of a primitive notion of 'making things out to be a certain way', aligned with the poles of correctness and incorrectness, captures in a systematic way the expressions and forms which proved resistant to Dummett's canonical form of explanation.

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Introduction

What is a Theory of Meaning?

Virtually everyone learns how to speak. And despite the dazzling complexity of human linguistic behaviour, it does not take the genius of an Einstein, or more than a few years' exposure, to grasp the basic patterns of one's native tongue. But what is talking? Not the voicing of mere sounds, surely–infants and insects do this–but the intentional utterance of those sounds recognized as meaningful by a particular group of speakers. By means of language we make known our intentions, beliefs, desires and attitudes, and thanks to language imagination can flourish. Via the use of words we do all sorts of things: comment on the state of the weather or politics, query the price of a pint or the origins of the universe. Routinely, we give orders and make requests, pleas and suggestions; we issue warnings, offer advice and undertake obligations. With carefully chosen words we hint, imply and insinuate things we may not want to convey explicitly. We hypothesize and fictionalize. Those especially skillful in the art of words give voice to the heights and depths of feeling: they express riveting drama, and pathos, and tragedy. Some people can even tell a good joke.

Competent speakers can do all these things and more because they have become familiar with the basic workings of their language: they know that by uttering particular words, or kinds of words, in certain recognizable patterns, and in certain recognizable circumstances, they represent things as being some way to anyone within earshot who also shares their linguistic knowledge. They

know, more specifically, of any particular concatenation of expressions, exactly which conditions it represents as obtaining. This is to say: they have a concept of meaning, and they know the meanings of individual words and the sentences into which they are composed, even if never before encountered. These observations border on the trivial; but where the interest is in laying bare the complexities in this seemingly simple picture, it is controversial whether we can abstract from variety and identify some general character common to the use of words and linguistic forms generally.

Considering the supposedly recondite relationship between concept possession and language mastery, the ability to understand novel sentences may possess an initial air of mystery. If someone enjoins us to "think something that no one has ever thought", we may naturally feel bewildered. Such an invitation has the ring of a formidable challenge to our creative powers: how, it may be wondered, is it possible to think of something never previously conceived–on the spur of the moment? But this enigmatic character quickly gives way to innocuous examples: 'Pumpkins don't grow zippers, and don't come in pink or purple, or polka dots'. Now there's a new thought for you; and we have the ingredients for an amusing, if short-lived, parlour game. Imagine someone constructing a bicycle out of spare parts expressing amazement that anyone should be able to ride *that* bicycle without the benefit of prior familiarity with *it*. Plainly, novelty is overrated: conveniently overlooked is our familiarity with different *kinds* of expressions and the patterns in which they combine to form sentences. Which might suggest that any form of explanation which makes heavy water of such unprepossessing character will cause our domestic geese

wildly to take flight.

This does not mean that linguistic ability refuses systematic description. On the contrary. Although utterly unmystifying, the capacity to understand novel sentences does stand in need of some explanation. Any account which rejects compositionality in favour of a view of sentences as non-decomposable strings, interpretable, perhaps, only in conjunction with non-linguistic contextual matters, will be mute on this point. Moreover, the role of contextual conditions must not be exaggerated. Where such features are genuinely in play, in general they do not create distinct meanings, but serve only to disambiguate different possible interpretations which are, in a sense, already there. Where a single form does admit of different interpretations, contextual conditions can be reckoned as–at most–an additional feature, but not one which obliterates the univocity, either of the larger unit or of its components. It is doubtful a particular utterance of 'I will wash the dishes' could ever–except by prior agreement–be taken to mean, 'Have you read the new Wittgenstein biography yet?'.

Although speaking is an acquired skill, actual teaching, whilst often helpful, is in no way necessary. Like bike riding, speaking ability manifests varying degrees of competence. I suppose that no one ever attains perfect mastery of a language as rich as English, say–at least, not if this requires that a single individual know the entire lexicon. Unlike the case with riding a bike, the knowledge which underlies speakers' linguistic competence is not merely a sort of practical know-how; it involves a certain amount of sophisticated propositional knowledge-*that*. Dummett contends that the most important task facing philosophers is to provide a systematic account of what speakers know

about the expressions they use which enables them to engage in verbal intercourse. This amounts to a theory of meaning for the language. One thing competence does *not* require is that individual speakers themselves be capable of giving an explicit account of what they know, either of the specific meanings of particular sentences, or of the principles associated with the concept of meaning more generally. Conformity to the standard pattern suffices: it is enough that speakers bring their linguistic practice into line with that of their community. We can tell when an individual knows the meanings of his words, despite his inability to state the pattern to which he adheres.

Somewhat surprisingly, perhaps, Dummett declares that no one is actually going to frame a theory of meaning for a natural language. What we are chiefly interested in is the basic *form* which such an account is to take, and the central concepts to be employed. Ironically, Dummett bases his own model on the work of Frege, who regarded natural language as so chock full of imperfections as to render impossible any systematic account of the meanings of its expressions. Despite Frege's view, Dummett urges that the structure of Frege's model-theoretic approach to formal languages such as first-order predicate logic with identity is applicable to natural languages, and that the concepts employed therein–chiefly those of sense, assertoric force and tone–can be extended to the more varied uses of ordinary discourse.

Dummett does not deny that a certain amount of linguistic knowledge, perhaps even a great deal, is acquired piecemeal; but he believes a generalized form of Frege's distinction between assertible contents and the assertoric force by which is conveyed the judgment as to their truth, applies to

all composite sentences of natural language generally–yes-no questions and injunctions included.* This is the familiar sense-force distinction, a central pillar of Dummett's model. On Dummett's view, the core of a theory of meaning consists in the theory of sense, concerning the way in which assertible contents–thoughts, or propositions–determine the truth-conditions of sentences in which they occur, on some suitable construal of truth. The theory of force, envisaged as a surrounding shell, is supposed to reveal the use to which entire sentences are put: force-indicating components signal the type of linguistic act–assertion, question, injunction–effected by particular utterances. The upshot is that every component of an utterance is to be explained in terms of its contribution to either the sense or the force of utterances in which it features. Anything else, such as the difference between 'before' and 'ere', for instance, is bundled into a supplementary category of 'tone'.

Dummett employs a schematic model comprised of canonical, or regimented, expressions as an heuristic device to indicate the basic semantic structure of utterances, and the language of first-order logic provides the elements for precise paraphrase of natural language sentences. The idea is that these metalinguistic expressions are continuous with natural language, so that, with appropriate parsing and paraphrase, any expression of natural language can be recast as a version of Fregean theory. Thus, analyses of e.g., causal, epistemic, modal or temporal statements all have a clear goal: they seek accounts which dovetail as closely as possible with the form of explanation dictated by the central tenets of the theory, especially the truth-conditional core. The task that remains to be performed in this project is that of showing that the

*NB. Throughout this thesis I employ the term 'injunction' as a more-or-less technical term signifying the general utterance-type to which specific linguistic acts such as commands, orders, requests, advice, suggestions and pleas may be said to belong. Similarly with the use of 'assertion' and 'statement', except in one or two places where these are distinguished as particular forms of affirmation.

theory fits. The usual strategy involves constructing a rudimentary theory of meaning along Fregean lines for a small fragment of a language–typically, declarative sentences composed of a name and a simple predicate in the indicative mood–and then attempting to show how the simple model can be extended to complex sentences and sentences featuring other expression-types, different verbal moods, word order, etc.

Despite the widespread support generated by this programme, examination of a small number of ordinary expressions and linguistic forms reveals serious flaws. With *wh*-questions, for instance, the sentence-radical, force-indicator model is a non-starter. Other problems attend composite interjections, sentence adverbs, modal auxiliaries, imperatives, declaratively ordered and negatively oriented questions, and certain closely related pairs like 'close' and 'shut', for which the true-false poles provide too crude a means for discriminating subtle shades of meaning.

Sentence-radical deficiencies are augmented by Dummett's mishandling of force-indicators. Although his view that force is reliably signalled by variations in linguistic form is generally speaking correct, Dummett's explanation of the meaning of force-indicating expressions fails to fully account for the standard significance attaching to the distinct elements of word-order, verbal mood and intonation. It is unsurprising, therefore, that he cannot discriminate between such questions as "Is he there?", "He is there?" and "Isn't he there?". Additionally, the cardinal thesis that force attaches solely to complete sentences and never to clauses within sentences is not invariably correct, as a number of examples show.

Criticisms of the sentence-radical and of the Fregean notion of sense lead invariably to an investigation of the almost wholly ignored concept of tone: any putatively semantic element not contributing to either sentential truth-conditions or utterance-force is indiscriminately dumped into this category. In Part Two I sketch a way of sorting out varieties of tonality, exemplified by differences among such word pairs as 'flashlight'-'torch', 'sweat'-'perspiration', 'cheekbone'-'zygoma' and 'Chinese'-'Chink'. Frege's gloss in terms of poetic flavour is obviously too narrow; and Dummett's claim that every dictionary label like 'archaic', 'vulgar' and so on, signals a distinct tone, is far too generous. Moreover, not all differences characterizable as tonal are strictly a matter of linguistic meaning: the concepts of use and meaning can here be prised apart. Furthermore, excessive focus on truth-conditionality results in the erroneous consignment to the category of tone of such expressions as the adverbs 'still', 'already' and 'yet', not to mention conjunctions like 'and', 'but' and 'although'.

The line between linguistic meaning and other conditions relating to the use of language is in many cases exceedingly fine. In general I support Dummett's distinction between the meaning of an utterance and the 'point' intended by someone who voices that utterance on a particular occasion. Although I make no attempt to examine systematically the multiplicity of conditions associated with the likes of Gricean implicatures, for instance, where many of the examples take us to this point I try to provide principled reasons for drawing the line in one place rather than in another.

As a beginning, one thing that can usefully be said, though it comes as near as may be to a platitude, is exemplified by the following observation: the

sentence, 'John Major is prime suspect' differs in meaning from the sentence, 'John Major is prime beef', and differs, specifically, according to the difference in meaning between the words 'suspect' and 'beef'. This is just to say that the meanings of sentences are sensitive to certain differences. Not only different words, but their arrangement, too: cf. 'Botham has retired' and 'Has Botham retired?'. This confirms the 'compositional' character of sentence meanings, expressible by the equally trite observation that the meaning of a sentence is a matter of the meanings of its individual words together with the way in which they are arranged. Although not every difference corresponds to a difference in meaning–cf. 'Trixie has one blue eye and one green eye', and 'Trixie has one green eye and one blue eye'–the approach I am advocating respects Dummett's parsimonious attitude toward the assignment of expression-meanings: as a rule we seek explanations which, as far as possible, assign constant meanings to individual expressions across the different contexts of their use. It seems often to be assumed that two words or two constructions that differ in form can nevertheless possess the same meaning: in order to facilitate systematization, important distinctions get sacrificed for the sake of theory, and meaning is reduced to the truth-values of formal logic.

But the converse also shows up a mistake to be avoided. Another point favouring univocity is what Dummett calls Frege's 'context principle', viz, only in the context of a sentence does an individual expression have a meaning. Dummett explains this as the thesis that in the order of explanation of the general concept of meaning, the idea of sentence-meaning has priority over that of word-meaning, even though the meanings of individual sentences are

determined by the meanings of their constituent words. The correctness of the compositionality thesis notwithstanding, word-meaning is to be explained in terms of a contribution to sentence-meaning, where the latter is characterized by some one general formulation relating to, e.g., truth- or verification-conditions. I accept this context principle; but it is important to understand it as relating the meanings of individual words not to any particular sentence, or sentences, but to *all* types of constructions in which they occur. We cannot be satisfied of having framed an adequate account of the adverb 'not', for instance, having looked only at examples for which it can be paraphrased as a truth-functional sentence operator.

Sometimes, syntactic considerations press us to assign different meanings to what appears, morphologically, to be the same word: e.g., 'bank' (along the Thames) and 'bank' (for depositing money). With such examples there is a strong inclination to speak, not in terms of two meanings of a single word, but rather, of distinct words. Other cases do not bifurcate: cf. 'remind' as it occurs in 'He reminded me of a former colleague' and 'He reminded me of my prior obligation'. Plainly, these two sentences differ in meaning; but we should look to the obvious differences in verbal complementation–rather than to any supposed ambiguity in the verb–to account for the semantic differences between the larger units. There is a tendency to regard too many words as possessing numerous distinct, perhaps even unrelated, meanings. Conversely, the correct method embraces, as closely as possible, the principle of 'one form, one meaning'. Form, whether of words or of any other linguistic elements, indicates that various discernible senses, or 'sub-meanings', may be related by

a single underlying condition. In each particular case this possibility should yield only to the strongest evidence to the contrary.

As a preliminary sketch of the inadequacy of the truth-conditional conception of meaning consider the example of the indefinite pronouns 'someone' and 'somebody'. These may be thought to be so freely interchangeable as to suggest perfect synonymy; clearly, no appreciable difference in truth-conditionality is revealed by an existential quantifier analysis. Nevertheless, in certain contexts the conditions of intimacy, definiteness and individuality give the nod to the former, where the opposite conditions favour the latter. Similarly, consider the difference between infinitives and gerunds. Something like an 'hypothetical' character is felt to attend the former only, marking the unacceptability of * 'To wait has been a mistake'; whereas 'Waiting has been a mistake' is fine. Or again, consider how a truth-conditional analysis ignores the difference between attributive and predicative forms of adjectives. Not all adjectives can occur both before and after a noun: think of 'money galore' and 'the people are awake'. But even where both forms occur, a slight difference in meaning is discernible: in general, adjectives used predicatively describe a temporary state; attributively they do somewhat more, providing a general characterization of the noun. The sense-force and sense-tone distinctions result in violation of the principle relating form and meaning. 'Not' provides a perfect case in point: if Dummett were right about epistemic 'may' signalling a distinct type of force, and about negatively oriented questions like "Isn't he there?" having tonal character, 'not' would have to be understood as possessing three distinct meanings, according to whether it contributes to the

sense, force or tone of different utterances.

Dummett follows Frege in viewing meaning as an epistemological, specifically a cognitive, concept. This is right; but crucially, Fregean 'informativeness' is strictly confined to what falls within the scope of an assertion sign. Not only does this fail for other force-types, but anything conveyed less explicitly is regarded as a matter for audience guesswork, and is indifferently consigned to the category of tone.

In broad terms, this thesis constitutes an indictment of the very idea of a formal semantics for natural language, of the idea that explanations of meaning are to be structured on concepts borrowed from Fregean model-theory. More particularly, it criticizes any approach which partitions linguistic elements into the categories of Fregean sense, force and tone–the chief target being the idea that truth-conditionality assumes the central role in this endeavor.

On the positive side, I give support to the utility of a highly general notion of 'making things out to be some way', which has application right across the language, embracing the use of words in linguistic acts as diverse as stating, requesting and querying. This formulation is capable of handling those expressions and linguistic forms which prove recalcitrant for truth-based theories. Happily, it needs make use of no more than more-or-less conventional grammatical categories, and therefore enjoys the advantage of staying closer to our ordinary forms of speech. This results in both a more comprehensive and a more satisfying account of natural language expressions than that afforded by any account which relies on sophisticated formalizations built on the narrower poles of truth and falsity.

Part One

The Sense-Force Distinction

Dummett is perhaps the staunchest advocate of a Fregean sense-force distinction for the analysis of meaning. Indeed, there is substantially no change in his doctrines concerning this distinction from his earliest writings on the issue to his most recent (cf. 1976: 72, 1981a: 361, 1991: 113-114). We should have no idea, he claims, how to provide a systematic theory of meaning without recognizing the two basic ingredients of sense and force:

> It is difficult to see how a systematic theory of meaning for a language is possible without acknowledging the distinction between sense and force, or one closely similar. . . . What seems essential is that we should have some division of sentential utterances into a determinate range of categories, according to the type of linguistic act effected by the utterance; that there should be some notion of the sense of a sentence, considered as an ingredient in its meaning and as capable of being shared by sentences belonging to different categories; that the notion of sense be such that, once we know both the category to which a sentence belongs and the sense which it carries, then we have an essential grasp of the significance of an utterance of the sentence . . . . I do not think that we have, at present, any conception of what a theory of meaning for a language would look like if it did not conform to this pattern.
>
> (1978: 450)

Yet, for all its simplicity and systematicity, the theoretical representation of this distinction encounters a number of intractable problems. The idea is not, as Baker & Hacker urge, unintelligible; rather, the devil's in the details: serious difficulties confront the application to actual sentences of natural language. Among the kinds of examples discussed in this chapter are: *wh*- questions, interjections, sentence-adverbs, epistemic modals, conducive questions and tags, and imperatives. Other problems pertain chiefly to principles concerning force-indication: conjunctions, disjunctive interrogatives, conditionals, performatives, and a variety of utterances which on our ordinary understanding

are felt to have either embedded, or conjoined forces. To be sure, many other examples can be provided; it is just that those singled out here have perhaps not been considered in the light of Dummett's proposed model. These examples illuminate both the strengths and weaknesses of this account, and help point the way to a more promising account of sentence meaning.

To a large extent these difficulties derive from an attempt to bind meaning too closely to truth. This looks to be directly traceable to Dummett's adoption of Frege's strict identification of informativeness and the assertion of complete thoughts, which may relate to Frege's stipulation that the assertion-sign attaches only to *true* thoughts. Whether or not this view is ultimately to be rejected, truth's claim to centrality with respect to the logical analysis of languages for which inferential connections are of primary concern has considerably less appeal for a general form of explanation of everyday uses of natural language.

Although the focus of this chapter is largely destructive, certain patterns emerge. Ultimately, there is more than one way to skin a cat: natural language is sufficiently rich in linguistic elements exploitable in various ways for the purpose of conveying information other than by the assertion of complete, truth-evaluable thoughts. Contra Frege, these alternatives do not reduce to mere hints and guesswork, and a sufficiently broad meaning theory must accommodate them. In particular, the significance of linguistic form makes for valuable generalizations, and favours systematic treatment. The shortcomings of Dummett's canonical model point the way to a redrawing of the basic categories, leading to a more natural form of explanation pitched at the right

level to capture the most interesting generalities concerning the concept of meaning.

1.1 The very idea

Since Frege, the idea that utterances are decomposable into distinct components of sense and force has been developed by many others, most notably Hare, Stenius, and Davidson, whose accounts differ very little apart from terminology and notation (cf. Hare's 'neustics' and 'phrastics', Stenius' 'mood indicators' and 'sentence-radicals', and Davidson's 'mood-setters' and 'indicative cores': 1952, 1967 and 1984, respectively). Frege originally restricted his account to declarative sentences, but later extended it to their corresponding interrogatives. That he explicitly refrained from extending it to imperative sentences is something Dummett regards as a definite mistake, since it leaves Frege's account open to the charge that it fails to preserve lexical univocity across different sentence types (1981a: 307-308). Dummett has provided the most detailed examination of principles associated with this distinction, and I shall for the most part confine my discussion to his writings on this topic, though much of what I say will apply to similar accounts.

The basic idea is simple, and for a large range of sentences enjoys considerable intuitive appeal. It is easily brought out by considering a group of sentences like the following:

(1) The puzzle is solved.
(2) Is the puzzle solved?
(3) Solve the puzzle!

(4) Would that the puzzle were solved.

What, if anything, do these sentences have in common, apart from the words which occur in each? Can our understanding of these be represented in such a way as to display in a systematic way both in what their commonality and their differences consist? Answers to these questions form part of the heart and soul of explanations of meaning: they cleave a divide between forms of explanations which mark a distinction between the sense and force of utterances, and those which do not.

A theory of meaning articulates the general principles (implicit) knowledge of which both underlies and explains speakers' ability to understand arbitrary utterances of their language. A systematic account of these principles will represent utterances as consisting of two distinct semantic components. The Fregean *sense* of an uttered sentence is that feature which can remain constant over different linguistic acts. Viewed as a function of the meanings of the individual words and their arrangement, it is explicable in terms of associated truth-conditions–whether construed 'realistically' or 'anti-realistically' (Dummett, 1978: xxii). The senses of individual words and expressions, then, are to be understood in terms of their individual contributions to determining the truth-conditions of sentences in which they occur. Elements which signal the *force* with which a sentence is uttered are regarded as contributing to utterance-meaning in a quite different way: they serve to indicate which linguistic act is performed in uttering a sentence–whether an assertion is made, a question asked, or a command issued, etc.

On this picture a common sense, or Fregean thought, can be ascribed to

different sentences, and one and the same thought can be asserted, queried, enjoined, or wished for. So, according to Dummett, the four sentences with which we began are identical in sense: each expresses the thought *that the puzzle is solved.* They differ only in that (1) asserts that this thought is true, while (2), (3), and (4) ask whether it is true, command that it be made true, and express the wish that it were true, respectively. Thus, this model rather elegantly overcomes one immediate objection to truth's centrality, viz, that utterances of interrogative and imperative sentences are not truth-evaluable.

Accordingly, a theory of meaning will really be comprised of two theories, one which gives a general account of the sense of sentences in terms of truth-conditions, and the other which provides an account of the various linguistic acts effected by uttering sentences of a certain form. On Dummett's canonical model, the sense of a sentence is represented by what Wittgenstein calls a 'sentence-radical' (1958b: §11n). The force component is represented either by a regimented form of expression like 'It is the case' for assertions, 'Is it the case' for questions, and 'Make it the case' for imperatives, or by special symbols, whose use is stipulated so as to conform with their lacking sense. Thus, 'ł-' is prefixed to a thought in order to indicate the thought is asserted; '?' indicates the thought is queried; and '!' indicates the thought is enjoined, and so forth. The chief principle emphasized by Dummett is that force attaches solely to whole sentences and not, e.g., to clauses within complex sentences. This also reflects the strong intuition that linguistic acts of various types can only be effected by uttering complete sentences.

So much for the bare bones. Recently, the idea of a general and systematic account of meaning has come under attack from Baker & Hacker. They launch an all-out assault on practically every conceivable aspect of this programme, and the very idea of a sense-force distinction is a primary target (1984: chs. 2 and 3). Their criticisms fall into two general categories. The first is comprised of objections to various concepts used in explaining the sense-force distinction on the grounds of incoherence and inconsistency. For example, they attack the idea that ordinary sentences 'contain' sentence-radicals and 'express propositions', and they ridicule as unintelligible the notion of 'descriptive content'. Criticisms of a somewhat different nature have to do roughly with the machinations of Dummett's regimentational schema of force-indicators and sentence-radicals. Here Dummett faces serious objections; but they are problems of detail, not intelligibility.

Baker & Hacker denounce the idea that sentences *contain* a sentence-radical (1984: 72-73). They also fault the notion of 'descriptive content', claiming that, as an ordinary language term it cannot be used to explain the technical 'sense' (ibid.: 80-87). They 'interpret' the idea that sentences contain a descriptive content as ". . . the claim that all sentences *describe* a state of affairs . . . "–an obvious falsehood, surely, but *not* one to which Dummett is committed. Thus (mis)construing the claim, Baker & Hacker parade a host of reminders concerning the kinds of things ordinary language licenses us to say about descriptions. Salutary as these remarks may be, they are clearly beside the point. No one claims that all sentences *are* descriptions in the familiar sense–a patent absurdity in the case of interrogatives, imperatives, etc.–nor

even that sentences *contain* a description, in any orthographic sense. 'Descriptive content' simply signifies that aspect of a sentence's meaning which speakers associate with a particular set of extralinguistic conditions; and in uttering a sentence a speaker either asserts that those conditions obtain, asks whether they obtain, or enjoins that they be made to obtain, etc.

Baker & Hacker take a similarly narrow view of the notion–hitherto routinely employed by logicians and philosophers alike–of *expressing a proposition* (ibid.: 101-105). The idea that different sentences, or formulae, can express the same proposition is so familiar as to need no rehearsal here. Despite acknowledging the well-entrenched practice involving *this* idea of 'expressing a proposition', Baker & Hacker find the notion wanting in light of ordinary usage. Their strategy is the same here: compare the theoretical expression with everyday uses of the same form of words, and criticize it for not being used in precisely the same way. A brief glance in *The American Heritage Dictionary* serves to uphold the legitimacy of this use of the compound expression: a logical proposition is said to be "Something that is expressed in a statement, as opposed to the way it is expressed". Moreover, the verb 'to express' does not require its object to be written or spoken in an *explicit* form.

These examples represent a rather desperate attempt to have a short way with forms of explanation which invoke a distinction between sense and force by ruling them unintelligible. It is doubtful that Baker & Hacker's strategy is one which Wittgenstein would favour in this context. For one thing, it appears to conflict with certain of his ideas concerning language-games and the social character of meaning. Baker & Hacker reject deviations from ordinary usage.

But who is to say that some way or other of *extending* an expression's use is impermissible? If sufficiently many speakers find it natural to 'go on' in a certain way, who is to say that they *cannot*? Or, if a particular identifiable subgroup of speakers finds it useful to adopt a special use of some expression, what is to stop them? What prevents them from treating their use as an extension, as a family resemblance even, of the common expression? In short, precious little. Baker & Hacker's strategy betrays a stubborn refusal to allow a particular–in this case well-entrenched–language-game. But after all, Wittgenstein claims that new language-games appear and disappear with great freedom (1958b: §23). Far better, then, to grant a little licence, to go along with the proposed 'game', trying to understand it in the way of the other players, and only then attempting to ascertain the applicability of their claims. This is the strategy I will pursue in all that follows.

1.2 Interjections and *wh*- questions: what so?

Contra Baker & Hacker, the very idea of a sense-force distinction is not senseless. Neither does unintelligibility confound the claim that utterances of natural language conform to the pattern of force-indicators and sentence-radicals. What *is* questionable is whether linguistic knowledge is fully explicable on this basis. Chiefly at issue are the adequacy and perspicuity of this framework with respect to actual linguistic usage.

Dummett issues an immediate concessional qualification: his canonical model is not applicable to sentences with certain kinds of force. Thus,

> We are concerned only with those types of force which attach to sentences

> expressing complete thoughts. On any account of the matter, there are other sorts of force: for instance, the expression of unspecific distress or satisfaction, greeting, summoning, the asking of non-sentential questions (questions governed by 'Who . . . ?', 'When . . . ?', etc., which may be said to ask after the value of a variable satisfying some predicate).
>
> (1981a: 328)

This admission is more than a little damaging, given that the theory is supposed to disclose the meaning of all sentences which are not simply idiomatic. Trouble is, this restriction exempts a significant chunk of language. So, when do counterexamples bite? Just how much system is required? Just enough, I should say, to account for speakers' ability to pass from what is familiar to an understanding of sentences not previously encountered. On any account, a considerable number of expressions are learned piecemeal; however, *wh*-questions and many interjections are not of this kind. Especially with the former, Dummett's telling concession immediately suggests that we would do better to seek a different account, rather than remain with a model patently constricted by the leanness of Fregean thoughts.

For Dummett, expressions such as 'Hurrah!' and 'Hello!' fall outside the purview of a systematic theory of meaning. Or, rather, they are precluded from the generalizable and systematic *part* of such a theory, relegated instead to some supplementary adjunct, perhaps not unlike that reserved for tonal expressions. True, interjections commonly exhibit no analysable structure, and are not normally classed among the four main types of sentences: declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamative (cf. Quirk, et. al.: 385-386). And true again, they are not expressions to which we customarily ascribe truth or falsity. Nevertheless, it is doubtful that they stray entirely from the fundamental principles with which use of even the most straightforward declarative

sentences is bound. This thought is, if anything, even more pertinent with *wh*-questions; for they make no significant departure from conditions governing the use of interrogative form generally. Clearly, a theory which represents yes-no questions, alternative questions and *wh*- questions as variations on a theme is preferable to any which sweeps one (or more) of these under a carpet.

First, a brief look at interjections. One possibility for preserving Dummett's sense-force distinction is to treat expressions like 'Damn!', 'Alas!', and 'Hurrah!' as devoid of sense, their meanings characterized wholly in terms of a contribution to *force*. For instance, the meaning of 'Hurrah!' could be construed as consisting solely in its use as a cheer. Similarly, the meaning of 'Hello!' might consist solely in its having the force of a greeting. Depending on the number of forces we are willing to tolerate, this might not seem entirely unwelcome. Yet Dummett is surely right in differentiating these and similar sorts of *illocutionary* force from those of assertion, question and injunction. Illocutionary forces such as warnings, threats, greetings, summonses, etc., are naturally associated with speakers' intentions, and thus with conversational conventions; moreover, they cross the boundaries of the more basic sentence-types. E.g., the *question*, "How are you?" is often voiced as a greeting, and the *statement*, "I'd like to see you in my office", is commonly understood as a summons.

English contains different forms of greetings. *Qua* greetings, they share something in common, naturally; but all greetings are not necessarily synonymous. Some differences may be attributed to tonality, like those between 'Hello!', 'Hi' and 'Howdy', for instance; but to characterize the meaning

of 'Greetings!' and 'Good-day!' solely in terms of force and tone obscures their connection to other uses. 'Greetings!' is plainly related both to the verb 'to greet' and the nominal 'greeting', and similarly 'Good-day!' partakes of the individual components of its compound structure. Perhaps many interjections are, after all, idiomatic; their associated conditions learned only piecemeal. But it looks doubtful that *every* form of greeting is to be thus characterized. And what of our understanding of the *form* more generally?

Consider, also, an example like 'Hurrah for Aston Villa!', where 'hurrah' occurs as a structural constituent. Construing the meaning of the entire sentence solely in terms of force is out of the question: this fails to distinguish it from 'Hurrah for Heseltine for standing against Thatcher!'. More importantly, such sentences display a modicum of articulated structure–enough, I should say, to warrant their inclusion in a systematic account of meaning. It is undeniably trite to point out that the meanings of the following sentences reflect the differences among their respective individual words and structures:

(1) Hurrah for Aston Villa!
(2) Hurrah for Tarzan!
(3) Hurrah for Tarzan for contesting Mrs. T.!
(4) Hurrah for Tarzan for opposing the poll tax!
(5) Hurrah for Tarzan for contesting Mrs. T. and opposing the poll tax!

Unfortunately, the sentence-radical approach cannot account for this, since although we might regard 'hurrah' as signalling a kind of force, there is no Fregean thought for a sentence-radical to get hold of. This is obvious with (1) and (2); but perhaps (3)-(5) might be rendered in some Frege-inspired canonical form, such as *Hurrah -the fact of Tarzan's contesting Mrs. T.*

Naturally, there is a slight difference between applauding Tarzan and applauding an action which he performs; more importantly, the canonical version fails to capture the assertoric implication of the natural form. Still, there can be no doubt that (5), especially, adheres to the fundamental thesis of compositionality. On the other hand, 'hurrah' cannot, in general, be assigned a contribution to force merely, because it carries meaning as an individual word, enjoying a use both as a noun and as a transitive verb in truth-evaluable sentences. Such uses, as in 'We became hoarse hurrahing Mary's success', may indeed be derivative, priority lying with the interjection. Yet other examples defy this pattern of explanation: cf. 'Surprise!', and 'Congratulations!'.

If we are to respect the intuition that words carry the same meaning in different sentences, we shall be obliged to assign a sense to sentences (1)-(5), even though none expresses a complete thought–as attested to by the impossibility of their occurring in antecedents of conditional sentences ('the Frege point': cf. Geach, 1972: 254-255). With these examples we come closer to exclamatory sentence form; but this provides no solace, since for Dummett's scheme utterances like "How good (it is) to see you!" and "What a splendid afternoon (it is)!" are equally recalcitrant.

Lewis proposes a systematic treatment of such expressions, whereby all non-declarative sentences are construed as paraphrases of performatives (1972: 207-212). Thus, e.g., 'Lock the gate!' and 'Is the gate locked?' are recast as 'I command you to lock the gate' and 'I ask you whether the gate is locked', respectively. He extends this treatment to sentences like (1) and (2) above: the meanings of 'Hurrah for Tarzan!' and 'I cheer Tarzan' are said to be represented

by one and the same performative base structure. A connection to truth is maintained by assigning to the natural sentences the truth-value of their corresponding performatives. Naturally, this presumes that performatives *have* truth-values. But whether they do or not, one must have a strong stomach to tolerate the ascription of truth and falsity to the natural versions. Lewis' remark (1972: 210) that "after all, we need not ever mention their truth-values if we would rather not" does little to soothe the upset.

In any case, crucial differences attend interjections and performative sentences: among them, the obvious fact that performatives mention both the subject and an action, whereas interjections do neither (cf. McGinn, 1977: 305). They cannot, therefore, be perfectly synonymous. Moreover, this approach is unsuitable for declarative sentences, since they do not invariably share the same truth-value as their corresponding performatives: e.g., 'I declare the earth is flat' and 'The earth is flat'. In spite of this, Lewis claims that treating declaratives as paraphrases of performatives (a manoeuvre explicitly proposed by Ross, 1970) could conceivably be regarded "as semantically a version of the method of sentence-radicals, even if it employs base structures that look exactly like the base structures employed in the method of paraphrased performatives ". This goes against what must be an overwhelming intuition that sameness of base structure determines sameness of meaning–and truth-value. Lewis cannot have it both ways. The asymmetry weighs heavily against a performative analysis.

Finally, Lewis' scheme fails to represent imperatives, questions, and injunctions as possessing identical sense, because his sentence-radical

expressions differ: compare 'I command you *to lock the gate*', 'I ask you *whether the gate is locked*', and 'I declare *that the gate is locked*'. More importantly, with the performative paraphrase 'I cheer Tarzan', what is the force-indicator and what the sentence-radical? If the entire performative is depicted as expressing the sense of the cheer, then there is no force, i.e., no cheer. If, on the other hand, what seems more likely, Lewis intends the expression 'I cheer . . .' to be taken as the expression of force, then we are left without a complete thought for the radical to express. Clearly, a proper name on its own will not do (cf. Frege, 1879: §2).

I sympathize with Lewis's desire to systematize greetings, cheers, and other 'formulaic' sentences, but must conclude that his performative analysis does not do the trick. Many specialized formulaic utterances such as greetings, farewells, and toasts may be said to lack content; the same *may* hold with imprecations ('Oh hell!', Damn!) and expletives ('Gosh!', 'Christ Almighty!'). Others, like alarms ('Fire!', 'Danger!'), and other miscellaneous exclamations ('Goal!', 'Excellent!', 'Pity!') possess a greater claim to informativeness, even though the content of a communication effected by means of uttering them cannot be characterized as comprising a Fregean thought. In any case, such examples are to be distinguished from those which Dummett alludes to in the opening passage. Words like 'ow' and 'ouch', 'ooh' and 'ah', may be said to express unspecified distress or satisfaction. Yet these and others, like 'er', 'ugh', 'whew' and 'tut-tut', are better understood as natural signs *of* something or other–character as a sign *for* some thing or condition being required for inclusion in the *language*.

Dummett also exempts the proposed scheme from accountability for *wh*-questions. On the face of it, this is a fatal defect. Surely, these differ significantly from both meaningful formulaic expressions and meaningless natural signs. A suitably general account of interrogative form should depict yes-no, alternative, and *wh*- questions as variations on a theme. After all, 'who, 'what', 'when', 'where', 'why', 'how', and the rest enjoy perfectly good uses in assertoric contexts, where they contribute to the correctness or incorrectness of the larger unit; and our formulation should respect the intuition that these words bear the same meaning in declarative, interrogative and imperative contexts. Even more than interjections, *wh*- questions exhibit a wealth of articulated structure. Yet two formidable obstacles confront Dummett's canonical framework. The first is how to represent the meaning of the pronouns 'who', 'what', 'why', 'when', 'where', and so on, in interrogative contexts; the second is how to represent the implicit 'presuppositions' with which such questions are semantically linked. Consider the following sentences:

(7) Dinner will be served.
(8) Will dinner be served?
(9) Dinner will be served when?
(10) When will dinner be served?
(11) Dinner will be served when mother arrives from the office.

According to Dummett, (7) and (8), but not (9) and (10), contain the complete thought, *-that dinner will be served.* (11) also contains a complete thought: *-that dinner will be served when mother arrives from the office.* Dummett contends that we are only interested in forces which attach to complete thoughts. But why, despite the obvious similarities–especially between (7) and

(9) and between (8) and (10)–can we not identify a thought in (9) and (10)?

A perfectly natural idea is to represent *wh-* elements as contributing to force-indication, along the lines of:

When (how, where, why) is it the case -that dinner will be served.

Such a form invites us to recognize corresponding species, or subspecies of force, for each *wh-* question. Perhaps we can live with that. Or perhaps the several seemingly distinct *wh-* questions can be reduced to a basic type, to a single indicator like Q_{what}. So, e.g., 'when' might be recast as 'what time', 'where' as 'what place', 'who' as 'what person', and so on; the corresponding questions characterizable, as Dummett suggests in the passage above, as asking after the value of a variable (located within the radical). Thus, an utterance of 'When will dinner be served?' might be recast along the lines of,

Q_{what} *-that dinner will be served at SOME time*[1]

After all, acknowledging *wh-* questions as a subspecies of question tacitly suggests that the difference lies in the *question* element. In the passage quoted above, Dummett suggests that his canonical framework cannot be extended to these questions because they represent a distinct kind of force. But, whether or not all *wh-* questions can be represented in the above fashion, the chief drawback of this manoeuvre is that we are obliged to regard interrogative pronouns as stripped of their customary senses. Although we can distinguish their varying grammatical functions–intensifier, determiner, relative

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[1] In erotetic logic, a propositional function bound by a quantifier: (Q_t) (dinner will be served at *t*): i.e., 'what time *t* is it, such that dinner will be served at *t*?'. For our purposes, the question is: does the quantifier contribute to sentence sense–as in standard sentential logic–or does it contribute to the force with which the interrogative sentence is uttered?

pronoun, adverbial–it is difficult to put aside the conviction that the differences between the following cleft sentences is not due to different senses of any of the component words, but to structural variability:

(12) It is what you expected.
(13) Is it what you expected?
(14) What is it you expected?

Now, the questions "Is he there?", "Is he there, or is he in Vegas?", and "Where is he?" differ, not in interrogative force, but in the kinds of replies they invite. This is primarily a matter of their respective senses. The fact that we can distinguish these three types of questions does not entail that their differences are associated with differences in force. On the other hand, to maintain the univocity of 'what' in (12)-(14) evidently requires that we eschew any explanation couched in terms of common sentence-radicals. Canonical paraphrase of interrogative pronouns is simply unavailable to Dummett's scheme. But *wh-* questions comprise a significant chunk of language. To give up from the start on the possibility of accommodating them within a systematic account of meaning is surely too great a concession.

Baker & Hacker consider what they say is 'a typical solution' (although they cite no one who has actually proposed it) to the problem posed by *wh-* questions, namely, that they be assimilated to imperatives enjoining the hearer to supply missing information (1984: 100-101). Accordingly, they reconstrue the question, "What time is it?", as a cumbersome imperative, "Fill in the blank in 'It is __ o'clock' to yield a true statement", which unsurprisingly, differs radically in content. Nothing hangs on the characterization of questions as requests for information; *unless*, of course, this is intended as a strictly *theoretical*

categorization. Even Baker & Hacker concede that "a *wh-* question is typically used to request information from the addressee" (ibid.: 101). Katz, however, leans toward the stronger claim: he says that not only are interrogatives close semantic relations of imperatives, but that syntactic evidence suggests they may even *be* a form of imperative (1968: 467-468). We shall see, however, when we come to examine some of the special problems imperatives present for Dummett's scheme, that the syntactic evidence is far from conclusive. For now, conceding a natural affinity between questions and requests, a kinder paraphrase might be something like 'Please tell me what time it is'.

Compliance-conditions for this injunction are strikingly similar to the question's correct answer; though, strictly speaking, the former are to the effect *that you tell me what time it is*, whereas the correct answer is simply *what time it is.* Still, by uttering either sentence a speaker expresses his desire for the same thing: *your telling me the time.* Despite these similarities, subtle differences are reflected by the responses which each accepts. For instance, with the request, but not the question, it is perfectly in order to just say 'No'. Also, the retort, 'Why should I?', queries the main verb in the request; but as a response to the direct question it requires expansion along the lines of 'Why should I tell you?', or 'Why should I answer that?'. However suggestive the similarities, *wh-* questions are not to be assimilated to imperatives, tempting though it might be in light of a particular theory.

Now, whether or not the formalizations of an erotetic logic can be made to satisfy the desiderata of Dummett's canonical framework with respect to specific interrogative pronouns, the implicit presuppositions of *wh-* questions

render these expressions even more uncompliant for this model. Every *wh-* question can be matched with a statement called its 'presupposition', which contains in place of the particular interrogative pronoun an indefinite expression such as 'somebody', 'somewhere', 'sometime', etc.:

'Who ate my porridge?'	*Someone ate my porridge.*
'Where are you going?'	*You are going somewhere.*
'What did he say?'	*He said something.*
'Who did what where?	*Someone did something, somewhere.*

Such presuppositions are said to be presumed true by whoever asks a *wh-* question (cf. Quirk, et. al.: 396-399). However, this way of putting things may lead one to suppose that a speaker's presumption is only inferable from the fact that he has uttered a question of this form–a kind of conversational implication–and is therefore not, strictly speaking, part of the meaning of the sentence itself. This would be wrong. If the speaker's presumption were merely associated with the motivation, or justification, for uttering a sentence of this form, he could without compunction say, "Never mind why I ask; I *know* that no one said anything. I just want you to tell me *who* made that remark." If to his question he adds either, "No one made a remark", or "I do not believe that someone made a remark", his question is compromised in just the same way that his assertion, "Someone made a remark", is compromised by the same additions. This indicates that these are semantic, rather than pragmatic, features of both sorts of sentences. Compare this with such common pragmatic conditions as the implication that the speaker does not know the answer to his question, and the further implication that in normal circumstances he believes the hearer does know: there is nothing contradictory in "I already know, but how

many legs does a centipede have?", or again, with "I believe you can't possibly know, but what is the square root of pi?". *Wh-* questions retain a connection to their characteristic presuppositions in such 'nonstandard' contexts as, e.g., test questions, barristers' questions and rhetorical questions, where there is a presumption that both speaker and hearer know the correct answer. Unlike conversational implications, these presuppositions need not be relativized to particular utterance occasions.

Now, even speakers who recognize the tacit presuppositions of *wh-* questions may be at a loss to say just which feature, or features, of such utterances is responsible for conveying this bit of information. Attention naturally falls on the interrogative particles, for their role in this seems to be supported by a similarly presuppositional character attending their use in assertoric contexts. Compare 'We'll be amused *when* he comes' with 'We'll be amused *if* he comes'. Plausibly, *wh-* roots indicate a shared demonstrative character with the *th-* of 'this', 'that', 'there', etc. However this may be, another seldom acknowledged feature of *wh-* questions bears on their quasi-assertive character: a characteristic falling intonation pattern. True, *wh-* questions can be voiced with rising intonation; but this standardly marks 'echo' questions, by which a speaker conveys his desire for the repetition of some previous utterance. Even here the basic pattern is exploited, not violated: the same presupposition is in effect; the difference being that echo questions represent the presupposition as belonging to *the hearer*.

Some care must be exercised not to exclude one or the other condition, or to assume they are collapsible. These presuppositions bear a close

resemblance to the kind to which Strawson drew attention in connection with the use of definite descriptions. Katz, who gives a semantic definition of 'the presupposition of a question' in terms of underlying phrase markers, regards this notion as being exactly parallel to that of the presupposition of a statement (1968: 473). However, with the latter, he claims that if the presupposition is false, then not only is no assertion made about any present King of France, say, but no assertion at all is made. Likewise with questions: no genuine request for information is made if the presupposition is false. But surely, the claim that a false presupposition entails that no assertion has been made, or no question asked, is too strong. For, even if the presupposition is false, both utterances represent the speaker as *believing* it to be correct. If neither assertion nor question were effected, we could not correctly say this.

Belnap & Steel similarly observe that "to ask a question with a substantive presupposition is, in ordinary circumstances, to hold oneself responsible for the truth of the question's presupposition and, thus, implicitly to make a statement" (1976: 115-116). It is precisely this 'quasi-assertive' character of *wh*- questions which resists Dummett's canonical scheme. Plainly, this semantic feature is attributable to nothing other than word meaning; yet it would be ludicrous to represent this in the only way which the scheme allows, namely as a full-blooded assertion. *Wh*- questions are not ordinarily recognized as truth-evaluable. Even so, Belnap & Steel propose that truth and falsity be ascribed to questions according to whether or not their presuppositions are true or false. This echoes a suggestion of Dummett's, that yes-no questions be ascribed truth and falsity according to whether they are

answered affirmatively or negatively, and that injunctions be designated 'correct' or 'incorrect' according to whether or not they are fulfilled (1978: 117-118; 1981a: 305-306). Belnap & Steel contend that theirs is not an excessively peculiar proposal on the grounds that we label questions 'sensible', 'intelligent', 'foolish', etc., despite the inaptness of * 'It is sensible (foolish, intelligent, etc.) whether Major is PM'. But such a locution does not provide the best basis for comparisons. More apt is, 'It is sensible (foolish, intelligent, etc.) to ask whether Major is PM'. Such a locution does mark a distinction with 'true' and 'false', precisely because of the incongruity of * 'It is true (false) to ask whether Major is PM'. Notice, however, that the poles of 'correct' and 'incorrect' are acceptable–a highly apposite point to which I will return in the final chapter.

The only possibility open to Dummett is to construe such questions, and all other expressions containing presuppositions, as logical conjunctions in which the explicit semantic content–be it declarative, interrogative, or imperative in character–is conjoined with the implicit presumption, represented as an assertion. But with *wh-* questions this advances us not one step. On such an analysis, a question like "Where did you buy that platypus?" can only be recast as 'I- (you bought that platypus somewhere) & $?_{wh}$ (you bought that platypus somewhere)', and we are still stuck with the troubling pronoun.

Quirk, et. al. err in their claim concerning negative *wh-* questions:

> The relation between a *wh-* question and its presupposition shows why negative questions of this type (except for *why* questions) are rare. While there is an acceptable presupposition for *why* questions:
>
> Why didn't he do it? ~He didn't do it for some reason
>
> there is no such correspondence with other question words:

> *Where didn't he do it? ~*He didn't do it somewhere
>
> The reason for the oddity of this last sentence is that *somewhere* is normally replaced by *anywhere* following a negative. On the other hand, *for some reason* is accepted following a negative because it is a disjunct, and therefore normally outside the scope of negation.
>
> (1972: 399)

It is unclear that negative *wh*- questions are the rarity that Quirk, et. al. imply. Examples such as 'Now, what haven't I done that I was supposed to do?' and 'When didn't I treat you with respect?' seem perfectly ordinary. Their explanation overlooks these possibilities for expressing the presupposition: 'There's something I haven't done' and 'At some time I didn't treat you with respect'. In any case, such negative forms merely add fuel to the fire for Dummett's preferred form of explanation.

1.3 Sentence adverbs: hopefully so

Faced with simple declarative sentences, and perhaps with their interrogative counterparts, it is easy to feel the pull of, and thus to sympathize with, the analysis given in terms of sentence-radicals and force-indicators. But, in order to remedy the imbalance caused by a diet of simple examples, one only need think of slightly more complex English sentences whose correct use is a matter of everyday familiarity. Even a brief survey reveals quite ordinary sentential elements which do not fit the proposed scheme. A good test case is provided by the class of sentence adverbs.

To modify a Davidsonian tableau: *Clearly*, strange goings on! *Allegedly*,

Jones did it slowly, deliberately, with a knife, at midnight. *Of course*, what he did was butter the toast (cf. 1967: 235). English adverbial expressions comprise a complex, yet patterned class, which can be broadly partitioned into those which are, and those which are not well integrated in clausal structures in which they occur; or, to put it less crudely, into those which do and those which do not signify a way, place, or time, etc., of *V*-ing (Greenbaum: 2-8; Rundle, 1979: 413-414. The divide between integrated and peripheral clausal elements may not always be sharp: cf. Hudson: 246). Examples of the former are those with which Davidson is concerned in his effort to reveal the logical form of action sentences in which they occur: Jones did it *slowly, deliberately,* etc.[2] Although they have proven stubbornly resistant to first-order logical formalization, such *adjuncts*, as they are known to grammarians and linguists, present no special difficulty for Dummett's deconstruction of the semantic form of sentences into sentence-radicals and force-indicators, since they clearly contribute to the sense of sentences in which they occur. They are, for instance, straightforwardly negatable, and they can occur in disjunctions and antecedents of conditionals. Probably the simplest, most natural way of understanding these expressions derives from the meanings of their corresponding adjectives.

Trouble comes, however, with adverbials which cannot be understood as modifying the verbal component of a clause–like those I used above with Davidson's action sentences. These cannot be interpreted as attaching to a verbal unit; rather they serve in various ways to qualify entire sentences, and are therefore often called *sentence adverbs.* They are classed as *disjuncts*,

[2]Davidson's theory is actually narrower in scope since he explicitly excludes the adverbs 'slowly', 'carefully' and 'intentionally'.

which are not primarily connective, and *conjuncts*, which are: a difference exemplified by e.g., '*Confidentially* (*basically, surely, regrettably,* etc.) she's not looking well these days' and '*Besides* (*moreover, first and foremost, finally,* etc.) you should know better than to throw snowballs at police cars'.[3] Initially, their contribution to sentence-meaning appears unsuited to an appeal to truth-conditions, this being generally restricted to predication *within* propositions, so to speak. No help is provided by Tarski-Davidson T-sentences which are, quite simply, out of place: 'Frankly, it looks as if they've used a lawnmower on your hair' is true iff Frankly, it looks as if . . . ; the assessment of truth or falsity being applicable only to what is expressed by the main clause and not to the sentence as a whole. Sentence adverbs do not conform to Dummett's canonical scheme of force-indicators and sentence-radicals. To which category do they belong? Neither looks appealing for an utterance of 'Confidentially, it stinks to high heaven':

It is the case -that confidentially it stinks to high heaven
It is confidentially the case -that it stinks to high heaven

If sentence adverbs cannot be explained in terms of a contribution to the Fregean sense of sentences in which they occur, i.e., as belonging to the sentence-radical, it looks even less plausible that they constitute distinct types or sub-types of force. There remains, of course, Frege's category of tone; but it will be readily appreciated that appeal to tonality here is not something Dummett would relish.

Frege, indeed, may have judged the significance of some such

[3]For syntactic and grammatical differences between adjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts see: Greenbaum: chs. 2-5; Jackendoff: ch. 3; and Quirk, et. al.: ch. 8.

expressions to be a matter of tonality; but it is not clear whether he thought this for sentence adverbs generally. In 'Logic' he says, "We can substitute words like *ah* and *unfortunately* for such a [sad] tone of voice without altering the thought" (1897: 139-140). Within the context of his discussion on thoughts and tone it is clear that Frege considers the contribution of the disjunct 'unfortunately' to be tonal rather than truth-conditional.

It is less clear, however, whether Frege regarded a sad tone of voice in such contexts as standardly carrying meaning, albeit tonal, so that 'My best friend died today', uttered with a sad tone of voice, might be taken as synonymous with an utterance of the same sentence without the sad voice, but prefixed by 'unfortunately'. But while there is no denying that certain tones of voice[4] are standardly (and intentionally) employed to convey a speaker's attitude toward what he is saying, this is akin to Gricean 'natural meaning'. Just as those clouds mean rain, that tone of voice means he is sad.

But there is a clear and systematic, not merely a peripheral difference, between 'Mother lost her job' and 'Unfortunately, mother lost her job'. First, both expressions can be spoken with a variety of recognizable tones of voice without thereby varying the meanings of the expressions themselves. More importantly, correctness of the latter but not of the former ensures the incorrectness of 'It is fortunate that mother lost her job'. And third, the difference between different disjuncts is not tonal, being quite obviously directly attributable to a difference in the sense of each: e.g., 'Surprisingly, he made amends' and 'Hopefully, he made amends'. Genuine instances of tonality occur, as with '*Truly*, p' and

[4]Not to be confused with 'intonation contour', associated with e.g., questions.

'*Verily*, p'; but this does not entail that the semantic contribution of the individual modifiers is solely tonal.

The most promising possibility for preserving Dummett's scheme is to construe sentence adverbs as contributing to sentence sense, and thus as belonging to the sentence-radical. In light of the difference between 'surprisingly' and 'hopefully', and especially because of the kinship with corresponding (truth-evaluable) adjectives, this is *prima facie* the best tack to take. Moreover, many disjuncts can themselves be modified, e.g., 'very surprisingly' and 'most importantly', and it would be a gross mistake to regard these intensifiers as carrying any meaning different from that which attaches to them in other contexts.

No doubt the most appealing manoeuvre is to view sentence adverbs as semantically equivalent to corresponding adjectival or participial expressions, thus bringing them within the bounds of a truth-based framework. So, e.g., 'Surprisingly, . . .' would be equivalent to 'It is surprising that . . .'; 'Unfortunately, . . .' similarly pairs with 'It is unfortunate that . . .'; and so on for other disjuncts: 'allegedly', 'clearly', 'curiously', 'inevitably', 'preferably', etc. Unfortunately, whatever its merits, this approach cannot be extended to all cases of sentence adverbs. More importantly, it rides roughshod over the principle of 'one form, one meaning' as this applies to differences between corresponding adjective and adverbial forms.

Before proceeding, we must expand the idea that sentence adverbs are replaceable by corresponding adjectival clauses, because the simple form 'it is ADJECTIVE BASE/PARTICIPLE BASE that . . .' will not do duty generally:

consider, e.g., the sub-class of style-disjuncts like 'frankly', 'honestly', 'broadly', 'confidentially', 'personally', and so on.[5] This by itself is no obstacle, however. Greenbaum distinguishes six basic classes of correspondences for attitudinal disjuncts, which help to identify further groups within the sub-class (1969: 91-98). For style disjuncts, a verb of speaking is generally understood. For instance, 'Frankly, she sounds like a rhino in heat' bears an intuitively close relation to such sentences as 'I am speaking frankly when I say that . . .' , 'I am putting it frankly . . .' , 'I tell you frankly . . .' , and so on, where 'frankly' occurs as a trouble-free adjunct within a subordinate clause. Indeed, Greenbaum claims,

> We can regard 'confidentially' as a truncated clause, sole unit in surface structure of one of several correspondences in deep structure. In surface structure its function is that of style disjunct; in deep structure its function is that of adjunct in a corresponding clause.
>
> (1969: 82)

References to deep structure notwithstanding, this idea is appealing because extending the notion of a (predicative) corresponding clause in what seems to be a natural and unexceptionable way offers a means of handling disjuncts which might otherwise prove recalcitrant. For instance, 'Socrates wisely said that the unexamined life is not worth writing home about' can be represented by the corresponding 'Socrates was wise to say that . . .' , where the correspondence formula is something like 'SUBJECT is (with appropriate tense and number) ADJECTIVE BASE to NON-FINITE VERB CLAUSE'. Or, to take another example deviating from the simple adjectival model, 'Happily, my son

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[5]Style disjuncts comment on the form of a speaker's utterance, indicating the conditions under which he is speaking, and are distinguished from attitudinal disjuncts which comment on the content of the utterance. For an account of the differences between style and attitudinal disjuncts see Greenbaum: 84-85. Both sub-classes may be further subdivided in various ways according to semantic and syntactic criteria. See Quirk, et. al.: 508-520.

returned home unscathed' can be paraphrased by a correspondence of the form: 'One is/I am ADJECTIVE BASE (that) CLAUSE' (both formulae are found in Greenbaum: 95). Thus, 'I am happy (that) my son returned home unscathed'.

Despite the attractiveness of this approach, it is defective in a number of ways, and its failure confirms Frege's view that sentence adverbs do *not* belong to the thought expressed. First, with respect to negation, an inappropriate employment of the disjunct in 'Amazingly, the composer was completely tone deaf' does not thereby render the utterance *false.* Unlike with the corresponding 'It is amazing that the composer was completely tone deaf', a more roundabout way of contradicting the speaker is required with the adverbial form. Straightforward negation of the former can be effected by 'No, he wasn't'; negation of the latter by 'No, it isn't', where the ascription of falsity latches on to the predicate. To counter the use of the disjunct, I say, *requires* a more explicit reply such as "What do you mean? I don't find that amazing at all. It's just what you'd expect, given his bizarre compositions." This difference is even more plain with the use of style disjuncts as in 'Seriously, you ought to quit smoking'. Tags similarly reveal the difference: 'Unwisely, he counted his chickens before they hatched, *didn't he*?' contrasts with 'It was unwise of him to count his chickens before they hatched, *wasn't it*?'.

There is a difference, too, with respect to conditionals. In general, the predicative form, but not the sentence adverbial, can appear in antecedents of conditionals. Thus, 'He is hopefully the rightful heir' is out of place in an antecedent–or at least is difficult to interpret; but the corresponding predicate form is perfectly acceptable: 'If it is hoped that he is the rightful heir, then

someone is in for disappointment'. In their usual initial position these adverbs are clearly ungrammatical in antecedent clauses; but some are acceptable in middle position: 'If he is truly (really, actually, conceivably, possibly, inevitably, etc.) the rightful heir, then . . .'. However, in such cases we have either an *intensifier*, or an adjunct which is minimally integrated within the clause, rather than an adverbial disjunct. In any case, to reveal the difference between the two forms it is enough that most disjuncts cannot appear in antecedent clauses of conditional statements.

Now it can be seen why T-sentences are of no use: in a homophonic truth-theory, a formula's right-hand-side consists in the entire sentence named on the left-hand-side, and thus, reading the equivalence from right to left, a disjunct will occur *inside* the conditional clause. Thus * 'If frankly she should get her nose fixed, then "Frankly, she should get her nose fixed" is true'. So, it is not just that the named sentence on the left-hand-side should not, in its entirety, be ascribed truth or falsity; the occurrence of the sentence modifier in the sentence on the right-hand-side, especially in initial position, is impermissible.

Similarly, sentence adverbs generally are out of place in both clauses of disjunctions. * 'Either she's apparently well preserved for her age or she's been less than honest'; * 'Either she's well preserved for her age or apparently she's been less than honest'. But, again, this does not hold for the correspondences: 'Either it's tragic that Rufus ate our dinner or it's fortunate that you like dog food'.

There is also the complex matter of ordering. So far, I have focused solely on sentences containing a single sentence modifier, but the constraints on combining and ordering these adverbials throw further light on their

differences with corresponding predicative forms. For example, sentence adverbs cannot appear adjacently: * 'Reportedly, wisely, Jones left a will'. This constraint appears not to apply to the predicative paraphrases, and so 'It is reported that Jones was wise to have left a will' is unobjectionable.

Furthermore, use of two adverbials, both of which are either speaker-oriented or subject-oriented, is ungrammatical. Hence the incorrectness of * 'Remarkably, Jones was regrettably not on the train'; but 'It is remarkable that it is regrettable that Jones was not on the train', though perhaps wordy, is nonetheless passable. Reiteration is also possible with predicate versions, but not with the adverbial: 'It is surprising that it is surprising that he arrived on time' contrasts in this respect with * 'Surprisingly, he surprisingly arrived on time'. With subject-oriented sentence adverbs like * **?** 'Justly, the judge prudently put off a decision', it is seemingly impossible even to form a corresponding subject-oriented version which paraphrases both disjuncts, though a single replacement is perhaps marginally acceptable: **?** 'It was just for the judge prudently to put off a decision'. Conceivably, we could expand Greenbaum's correspondence types and make do with a variation like 'It was just for the judge to be prudent in putting off a decision'; although the fact that we have to make alterations elsewhere down the line makes this appear a bit forced. Naturally, if we can devise an acceptable paraphrase for an unacceptable sentence, this further confirms their distinctness.

Jackendoff (1971: 89-92) cites another constraint to the effect that subject-oriented adverbs can follow speaker-oriented adverbs, but not vice versa; but

this seems to hold for corresponding paraphrases as well. Additionally, I find that style disjuncts can be followed by attitudinal disjuncts, whether speaker- or subject-oriented, but not the other way round. So, 'Honestly, Max has evidently been drinking', but not * 'Evidently, Max has honestly been drinking'. If 'Max has honestly been drinking' paraphrases as 'I say honestly (or, I am speaking honestly when I say) that Max has been drinking', then it seems permissible to preface this with the putative correspondence for 'evidently': 'It is evident that I am speaking honestly . . .'. Note that here 'evidently' is not even roughly equivalent in meaning to the predicative 'it is evident that': the former is more akin to 'apparently', while the latter is closer in meaning to 'clearly'.

Interesting as these features may be, one might be tempted to view them as mere 'idiotisms of idiom' (with a nod to Geach), not reflective of any significant semantic difference between the two forms. More plausibly, one might concede their non-synonymy, but hold that, nevertheless, the meaning contribution of the one is to be explained in terms of the other. Specifically, one might claim the contribution to sentence sense is to be explained this way. This would presumably account for the similarity in meaning between the two forms of sentence; the difference between, e.g., 'Strangely, he didn't greet his wife' and 'It is strange that he didn't greet his wife' to be attributed to tonality.

These views are to be resisted. An idiotism of idiom it may be for there to be an adjectival phrase like 'it is surprising that' to which no sentence adverb answers. However, it cannot be a mere idiotism if no adjectival phrase corresponds to a particular adverb–if the claim is that the former is required to explain the latter. We can, of course, invent some novel expression, and give it

a stipulative explanation. But to do so stretches Dummett's principle of conservative extension of the object language (cf. 1981a: 397). Worse, such an invention could in no way be said to provide an *explanation* of the everyday use of the corresponding adverb since it is not something knowledge of which *enables* speakers to correctly employ the latter. Neither is the behaviour of sentence adverbs with respect to conditionals and disjunctions a mere idiotism of idiom; such a view jeopardizes our understanding of the patterned workings of these forms of expression.

One of the most important features of the class of sentence adverbs, and one that is surely destructive of any reductive thesis, is that numerous sentence adverbs simply have no corresponding predicate form of any kind. Disjuncts like 'actually' and 'ostensibly' cannot be rephrased as 'it is actual that' or 'it is ostensible that', or indeed, as any of the other types of correspondences on offer. For many adverbs, use of a corresponding predicate yields a significantly different meaning from that occasioned by the disjunct: cf. 'naturally', and 'evidently'. One possible correspondence form Greenbaum overlooks, 'It is a ADJECTIVE BASE fact that CLAUSE', could conceivably do justice to some adverbials which otherwise appear immune to paraphrase. We might devise rephrasings like 'It is a seeming fact that' or 'It is an ostensible fact that'; and so on for others like 'actually', 'nominally', 'formally', 'outwardly', 'superficially', etc. This might be thought to work for others like 'decidedly' and 'apparently', for which such possible correspondences as 'It is decided that' and 'It is apparent that' mean something quite different. And so on for 'assuredly', 'naturally', and many others. (Though, here again, 'It is a natural fact that . . .' does not capture

the sense of 'Naturally, . . .', which is akin to 'of course'.) Other examples which likewise may be grouped together include 'basically', 'essentially', 'fundamentally', 'officially', 'technically', etc., and these might be rephrased, much like style disjuncts, with a manner adverb coupled with a verb of speaking: 'Basically speaking, . . .' , 'Officially speaking, . . .', etc.–supposing these could find their way into main clauses.

Perhaps, then, certain cases can be explained in a fashion congenial to Frege and Dummett's general enterprise: we do not want to say that individual disjuncts and adjuncts differ in meaning. Yet even if correspondence classes can somehow be extended to include these adverbials, there remain a significant number of sentence adverbs which simply have no corresponding form whatsoever, e.g., 'indeed', 'perhaps', 'of course', 'no doubt'. Up to this point I have virtually restricted the discussion to sentence adverbs ending in '-ly'. However, once we begin to consider the wider variety of this class, the illusion that sentence adverbs can invariably be replaced or explained solely in terms of another preferred form quickly vanishes: cf. 'To speak the absolute truth (In a manner of speaking, In all likelihood, Considering everything, To my surprise, As a matter of fact, According to my sister), Jane outperformed everyone'.[6] Furthermore, what has just been said about the subclass of disjuncts applies equally to the subclass of conjuncts including 'secondly', 'thirdly',' finally', 'lastly', 'correspondingly', 'equally', 'incidentally', 'namely', 'consequently', 'alternatively', 'conversely', etc., and especially to those which

[6]Jackendoff: 58, cites similar examples as refuting a transformational theory of adverbs, and includes adverbials such as 'According to Albert', 'In order to please his mother', 'Having lost the game', 'Now that he is married to Sue', which in initial position at least, function identically to sentence adverbs ending in '-ly'. See also Quirk, et. al.: 513, for similar adverbial prepositional phrases.

do not end in '-ly', such as 'in the first place', 'to conclude', 'furthermore', 'likewise', 'by the way', 'altogether', 'in other words', 'worse', 'by comparison', 'anyway', 'in the meantime', and so on.

For anyone who is by now still not persuaded that these expressions are not best served by the notion of sentential truth-conditions, there is a further decisive point. In light of the propositional thesis that one and the same thought may be asserted, queried, commanded and wished for, if sentence adverbs are to be understood as contributing to the proposition expressed by an utterance, they should appear in questions and commands as well as in assertions. This fails for the vast majority of these modifiers. Although many style disjuncts can appear with questions and injunctions, as in 'Honestly, do you think she'll come?' or 'To put it bluntly, go to the Devil!', this in no way supports a contribution to propositional sense. Rephrasing with the proffered correspondences given in terms of a verb of speaking, the impossibility of interpreting style disjuncts as belonging to the sentence-radical becomes patently obvious. Within the sub-class of attitudinal disjuncts the idea is a non-starter: 'She is hopefully (surprisingly, fortunately) the best dancer' does not transform into the interrogative * 'Is she hopefully (surprisingly, fortunately) the best dancer?'. On the other hand, a corresponding paraphrase is unproblematic: 'It is hoped (surprising, fortunate) that she is the best dancer' is easily transformed by subject-auxiliary inversion into the interrogative 'Is it hoped (surprising, fortunate) that she is the best dancer?', which is amenable to Dummett's canonical scheme of force-indicators and sentence-radicals.

Like style disjuncts, virtually all conjuncts can appear with questions, e.g.,

'First, why didn't you call?', ' Moreover, couldn't you have been more tactful?', etc.; and most can appear with imperatives, e.g., 'Finally, don't ring him at home', and 'Otherwise, tell her to get lost!'. However, like style disjuncts, conjuncts do not contribute to the senses of propositions to which they may be attached–although perhaps some may be represented, albeit with artifice, within the force-indicator, sentence-radical scheme. But, again, this will not hold generally.

What, then, is the result of this examination? It should be sufficiently clear that any attempt to account for the meaning of members of the class of sentence adverbs (whether disjuncts or conjuncts) by construing them as either semantically equivalent to, or semantically reducible to a predicate form of expression will not work–it attains insufficient generality. But, might the reverse be true, that the adverbial underlies and explains the adjectival? What grounds might there be for thinking this? Thomason & Stalnaker suggest that "it is possible to regard predicate modifiers in English as 'special cases' of sentence modifiers, in the following sense: sentences in which a sentence modifier is used will admit a reading in which the sentence modifier is used, so to speak, as a predicate modifier" (1973: 213). Although they explain that this would require "imposing some semantic constraints on predicate adverbs that would not be required by a direct theory according to which predicate adverbs are not derived from sentence adverbs", the details need not concern us here. The claim is not invariably true; in any case, the possibility of a predicate reading for instances of sentence modifiers cuts both ways, so does not favour one over the

other.

It is not so much the relation between conjuncts and adjuncts that interests us here; although for the subclass of style disjuncts the adjuncts with a verb of speaking provide the preferred correspondence. If in these cases an adjunctive use does prove to be a special case of sentence adverbial use, then so much the worse for the thesis that the former is more basic than the latter. Although the order of priority suggested by Thomason & Stalnaker may seem plausible for many adverbial pairs, it fails for others such as 'admittedly' and 'preferably', which do not admit a predicate modifier reading. In like spirit, Jackendoff suggests that the adverbs 'merely', 'utterly' and 'virtually' provide counterexamples to any suggested reduction or eliminability of the class, and proposes that their corresponding adjectives derive from the adverbs, not the other way round (1971: 55-56).

More emphatic still are examples of adjectives like: 'an *alleged* violation', 'a *supposed* gentleman', 'a *seeming* injustice', 'an *apparent* flaw'. Although these can be placed in correspondences of the form 'it is ADJECTIVE BASE that CLAUSE' or 'it is a ADJECTIVE BASE fact that CLAUSE', these adjectives cannot really be interpreted as signifying a property of the nominal expressions which follow them. An *alleged* fact is not a kind of fact; and neither are *supposed* facts, *seeming* facts or *apparent* facts. Hence, a possible dependence on adverbs: 'It is allegedly a violation', 'Jones is supposedly a gentleman', 'It is seemingly an injustice', 'There is apparently a flaw'. It is implausible that the adjective form either replaces or explains the adverbial in these and similar cases. Rather, the order of explanation looks to be from the

adverb to the adjective. Confusion may result from a failure to appreciate this simple point, not the least of it metaphysical. Possible facts are not facts, and neither are possible states of affairs states of affairs of any kind.

Suffice it to say, then, by way of summing up, that sentence adverbs are *not* to be explained via sentence-radicals, tied to the notion of truth, whether realistically or verificationistically construed. Then, if these expressions are not to be counted on the side of the sentence-radical, what possibilities remain?

It might be supposed that disjuncts and conjuncts contribute to utterance-*force*, whether as a unique type along the lines of assertions, questions and injunctions, or perhaps as a sub-species like orders, commands, advice, instructions, etc. The 'Frege point', which holds that a proposition can occur asserted or unasserted without changing identity, might seem to suggest this. More precisely, what Dummett calls 'Geach's test'–namely, that if a form of words cannot occur in the antecedent of a conditional, then it already contains some force-indicator, signalling the performance of some linguistic act other than assertion–might be thought to entail this (see Dummett, 1981a: 348-349; and Geach, 1972 and 1979). For, adverbial disjuncts and conjuncts generally cannot so occur. Thus, we might be tempted to regard an utterance of 'Fleabiscuit fortunately (frankly, amazingly, regrettably) wears Wellingtons' as embodying some linguistic act other than assertion. For example, we might characterize utterances of 'Allegedly, . . .' as allegations, 'Approximately, . . .' as approximations, 'Admittedly, . . .' as admissions, and 'Generally, . . .' as generalizations. Similarly, uses of the disjunct 'avowedly' might signify avowals, 'reportedly' reports, 'supposedly' suppositions, hypothetically'

hypotheses, and 'theoretically' theoretical statements, each of which is to be distinguished from assertions.

However, the fact that this would multiply forces, perhaps without limit–subgroups of disjuncts are almost invariably open classes–constitutes a counterweight. On this view, each and every distinct disjunct would represent a unique type of linguistic act on a par with assertions, questions and injunctions. Intuitively, this is too ludicrous to require rebuttal. The fact that some disjuncts (style disjuncts primarily) and virtually all conjuncts can appear with questions and injunctions would, minimally, impose qualification. There is no denying that "Incidentally, are you going to frown all day?" has the force of a question and "Incidentally, mind your own business!" has the force of a command; so perhaps we could regard these uses of style disjuncts as representative of a *sub-species* of question, and a *sub-species* of injunction, respectively. This, too, looks unpromising, considering such familiar 'varieties of force' as orders, commands, advice, instructions, etc. (cf. Rundle, 1990: ch. 7). Can 'incidentally' really be regarded as being on the same level as these? Because it can occur with assertions, questions and injunctions, we should be obliged to classify 'incidentally', and all related examples, as sub-species of *each* of these distinct force-types.

On Dummett's deconstruction, the canonical representation of assertoric force as *it is the case that-* is, strictly speaking, inappropriate, since these words carry Fregean sense in natural language: as Dummett himself acknowledges, they can undergo changes of tense and aspect and can occur in the antecedent of conditional sentences (1981a: 316). Hence the need for special force-

indicating signs–which *show* but do not *say* whether an utterance is an assertion, question or injunction. To follow this practice with sentence adverbs we should need a special sign for each–e.g., '@' for allegations, '®' for reports. Conceivably, a language richer in verbal moods might fit to a greater or lesser degree the view that such acts as allegations and reports be ascribed the status of distinct force-types; although it should still be felt that the number of such moods could not be completely unrestricted. Jespersen, for instance, tentatively lists twenty notional ideas discernible in the moods and auxiliaries of different languages; but although his list is not exhaustive, he also favours a parsimonious approach (cf. 1924: 320-321).

Besides multiplying forces, construing sentence adverbs as force-indicators violates the thesis that in general word-meaning is to be explained in terms of a contribution to sentence-*sense*. Counterexamples to this thesis must be interpreted as not possessing their customary meaning. An individual word contributing wholly to the force of an utterance is necessarily devoid of sense. But with most adverbs, at least those possessing corresponding adjectives or nouns, this severs any meaning-connection between them. With the sentences 'Jones is surprisingly responsive', 'Jones responded surprisingly', and 'Surprisingly, Jones responded', it may be asked whether we have three uses of the same word or distinct uses of three different homonyms. If a single word, are we to regard it as having (at least) three distinct meanings, or is the picture rather one of variations upon a single theme?

Any theoretical account of meaning ought to be of sufficient generality to bring together these different uses of the same lexical form. We should seek to

minimize rather than maximize the number of wholly different meanings, looking past diversity to a broader unity where possible. Now, there is no denying that we can distinguish syntactically between 'surprisingly'$_1$, 'surprisingly'$_2$ and 'surprisingly'$_3$ in these three sentences. No denying, too, that the three sentences differ in meaning. But the fact that we can account for this by appealing to syntax alone suggests that, lexically, we are dealing with a single semantic type. This gives us three uses of the same word, further supporting the distinctness of use and meaning.

Therefore, any attempt to construe uses of sentence adverbs along the lines of force-indicators devoid of sense undermines their univocity. To be sure, on Dummett's view, to say that a force-indicating expression is devoid of sense is not to say that it is devoid of meaning. But the meaning of a putative force-indicator like 'allegedly' or 'reportedly' would not be, on Dummett's view, such that it could be related to other contexts in which they possess sense–a fatal defect for this proposal.

Finally, whatever attraction there might be in regarding sentence adverbs generally as contributing to utterance-force, especially in light of the examples of 'supposedly', 'allegedly', 'reportedly' and the like, should immediately be dispelled by considering again the wider variety of expressions comprising this class. Plainly, we cannot acknowledge as representing distinct linguistic acts, of the same order as assertions, questions and injunctions, such adverbial disjuncts as 'According to Garp', 'For once in your life', 'In order to please your granny', 'Being a patient man', etc. Would 'Regrettably, but not surprisingly, . . .' constitute a single linguistic act, or would it embody two distinct but

simultaneous acts? We only need pose such a question to see how implausible the suggestion really is.

If the contribution of sentence adverbs cannot be accounted for by appeal to Dummett's scheme of sentence-radicals and force-indicators, with considerations of tone tacked on, what then? Does the inapplicability of the tripartite scheme mean that we should abandon altogether the distinction between sense and force, or can we find some means to preserve the distinction in the face of such expressions? Intuitively, creation of any further category would only exacerbate the failure of univocity.

The prominent difference in scope between adverbial disjuncts and adjuncts invites a syntactic formalization which mirrors as closely as possible the internal structure encountered in natural language. With respect to complex verbal phrases, this concern is familiar to approaches like Davidson's treatment of action sentences. For instance, for 'Danny quickly hid the candy', a simple form like '*Qa*', where *Q* is a predicate, fails to reflect the structure of the main clause, and is therefore open to the logician's complaint that the supposed inference to the truth of 'Danny hid the candy' is lost. Thomason & Stalnaker suggest extending first-order logic with notation for the class of predicate adverbs such as 'quickly'. They propose a form like '(Ω Q)*a*' , where 'Ω' represents predicate adverbs, to capture the internal structure, especially the fact that it is the predicate alone which is modified by the adverbial element (1973: 196-199). (The brackets also serve to distinguish this form from sentential negation, '¬ (Qa)'.) Some way of building up complex predicates is

required in order to handle sentences like 'Jones quietly rolled over and lit a cigarette', where the adverb modifies the conjunction of the predicates and not either one by itself. Cf. the differences between the following three sentences:

(Jones quietly hummed) & (Jones quietly lit a pipe): $(\Omega\, Q)a \;\&\; (\Omega\, R)a$
(Jones quietly hummed) & (Jones lit a pipe): $(\Omega\, Q)a \;\&\; Ra$
Jones quietly (hummed & lit a pipe): $(\Omega\;\; (Q \,\&\, R))a$

Note that this way of handling complex predicates involves an extension of the metalinguistic use of truth-functional sentence connectives, *&* and *V*. Explanations of their use in this representational scheme must be broadened to accommodate their use as predicate connectives. For this, Thomason & Stalnaker rely on the logical device of *abstraction*, whereby predicates are derived from sentences. The details do not concern us here; however, it is unclear this complication is something best avoided. Arguably, it is more in line with the language as we find it, considering that the usual translations into formal logic of natural language conjunctions and disjunctions shows little regard for other features of their natural use.

Syntactically, the need to represent sentence adverbs as distinct from both predicates and predicate adverbs is evident. Given a sentence with a predicate modifier, '(Ω Q)*a*', we need something like '**S** ((Ω Q)*a*)' to indicate that the entire sentence is modified. Thus can we represent sentences such as 'Surprisingly, Sally quickly repaired the tyre'. Geach also recognizes distinct syntactic categories of predicate adverbs and sentence adverbs (see 1970-71: especially 9-10). However, on his account combinations such as 'passionately and presumably' turn out to be syntactic nonsense because they join predicate adverbs with sentence adverbs. True, this and other similar examples are

inadmissible; but the reason is not that which Geach provides. Combinations of other adverbs from the two categories, e.g., 'passionately and regrettably' and 'sincerely and predictably', are inoffensive.

Now, whatever the syntactic story, we are still left without a grasp of the *lack* of a direct connection with truth. We cannot ascribe truth or falsity to entire formulae like '**S** (Q*a*)' or '**S** ((Ω Q)*a*)'. The possibility of syntactic formalization does not by itself yield either truth-functional or truth-conditional forms of expression. Because sentence adverbs cannot in general occur within the antecedents of conditionals, favoured T-sentences generate syntactic nonsense where sentence adverbs are concerned: '^**S** ((Ω Q)*a*)^ is true iff **S** ((Ω Q)*a*)'. The lack of a connection with truth is even more germane with such sentence adverbs as 'supposedly', 'allegedly', 'reportedly', 'apparently', 'seemingly' and the like, whose effect on assertoric force must now be examined.

If sentence adverbs have received scant philosophical attention, their relation to utterance-force has been almost completely overlooked. Worse, what little has been written looks to be largely mistaken. Spector, for instance, gives a gloss in terms of a 'double-barrelled' structure embodying a distinction between assertoric force and assertoric 'colour' (1978: 17-20). This leads to a characterization of such disjuncts as e.g., 'hopefully' and 'no doubt' as signalling a 'partial withdrawal' of assertoric force, thus explaining their inadmissibility in interrogative sentences. But, 'Jones has fortunately resigned' and 'Jones has surprisingly resigned' are no better in interrogatives; and their failure cannot be due to any partial withdrawal of assertoric force in declarative contexts.

Although it brings us closer to the truth of the matter, I think it makes little or no sense to speak of *partly withdrawn* assertions. Any utterance of a well-formed sentence either is an assertion or it is not. I see no room for an intermediate species of this linguistic act. Neither is the act of assertion a matter of degree. Undeniably, when faced with further evidence or grounds, we may either retract a statement, or appropriately modify it. The only sense I can make of *partly* withdrawing a claim is with cases where we want to say that something is (only) partly *true* (or, partly false). For instance, when I assert that Bertie acted virtuously in protecting the doomed fox, you may for the most part agree with me, but not wholly. You do not want to go so far as to contradict me outright. You might claim that it is only partly true that Bertie acted virtuously; perhaps in your opinion Bertie was not motivated solely by virtuous feelings. And I might agree with you. But this way of speaking really qualifies *what* is asserted; and although I might in some sense partly withdraw my original claim, that claim is, strictly speaking, replaced, or retracted, in favour of a further assertion. So, I might offer something like "Well, you're right; but *basically*, Bertie acted virtuously". Although the two utterances do not have the character of contradictories, they cannot stand together.

Spector's way of looking at assertions will not do for examples like "Hopefully, the English climate will be more to your liking", or "Supposedly, Johnson left the firm voluntarily". In neither example is the main clause even partially asserted. In each case the speaker employs an expression which conveys an attitude toward what is conveyed by the main clause. But, subordinated to the main clause, sentence adverbs do not fall within the part of

the sentence which is explicitly asserted. An attitude is affirmed, and by linguistic means, but the speaker does not state that he possesses this attitude. In this way the above examples differ from their explicit counterparts, 'I hope that the English climate will be more to your liking', and 'It is supposed that Johnson left the firm voluntarily'. The two forms do not merge into one, and individual words must be taken seriously: for instance, only the latter allow for further elaboration: 'I *sincerely* hope that . . .' , or 'I suppose, *without any good reason*, that . . .' .

The crucial character of adverbs like 'hopefully', 'allegedly', 'reportedly', 'supposedly', etc., relates to a complete *cancellation* of assertoric force–not to a partial withdrawal. The same holds for 'probably' and 'almost certainly', which, although they signal a greater degree of likelihood, nevertheless fall short of effecting an assertion. Whatever correctness attaches to attributing to a speaker a belief in the truth of what follows these sentence adverbs comes from correctly inferring the contextually-determined *point* of his utterance. When these adverbs are attached to sentences, neither the remainder of the clause nor the entire sentence is asserted; these and similar expressions provide precisely a way to avoid assertoric commitment. In the province of law, for example, this is often extremely important. Languages rich in adverbial qualifiers doubtless contain various expressions which enable speakers to come close to asserting something outright without committing to its truth. Perhaps there are genuinely borderline cases; but the general test is: if things are not, or do not turn out to be, the way the thought expressed by an utterance represents them as being, in uttering a statement containing that thought, has the speaker uttered *a*

falsehood?

In uttering 'Hopefully, your pig will win a blue ribbon', I do not assert that your pig will win a blue ribbon. Neither does the entire utterance constitute an assertion–another reason why the entire sentence is not well served by formal logical theory, where interest lies primarily with inferential role. For if, as Frege contended, an assertion-sign must prefix each well-formed formula, sentences modified by non-assertive adverbs cannot be accommodated. In the formula '**S** ((ΩQ)*a*)', '**S**' occurs outside the scope of assertion. Where '**S**' is replaced by an adverb like 'seriously' or 'unexpectedly', assertion of the main clause carries through, and we have '**S** ⊢ ((ΩQ)*a*)'. But if we replace '**S**' with 'hopefully' or 'allegedly', we cannot find room *anywhere* in the formula for the assertion-sign.

Where assertoric force is cancelled, an assertion-sign cannot appear in a canonical representation. More precisely, assertion-signs cannot appear in otherwise assertoric *clauses*. For sentence adverbs attach not only to entire sentences, but also to different kinds of clauses, e.g., non-restrictive relative clauses: 'I visited the battlefield, where, tragically, thousands died'. Naturally, we could introduce a special symbol to indicate when assertoric force is cancelled, like an assertion-sign with a slash through it.[7] However, since cancellation is tied to particular sentence adverbs, such a treatment fails to perspicuously locate the contributing element, implying, perhaps, some special significance on the part of the standard force-indicating elements. What we should need is a distinct way of representing members of this class of adverbs, say '**S***', whose explanation includes a rule to the effect that the force of an

[7]In the next section I discuss problems attending use of the negation sign with force-indicators.

utterance containing a member of this class is cancelled. There is no denying that these cases constitute *statements*; but they are non-assertive ones, perhaps not unlike ostensibly performative utterances. Whatever formalization is adopted must mark a basic distinction between those sentence adverbs which do and those which do not cancel the customary force of utterances. Incidentally, even though Frege failed to incorporate these expressions in his formal script, this supports his view that assertion-signs are required therein.

The failure of Geach's syntactic account of adverbs can now be traced to the behaviour of a particular subclass of expressions. This subclass provides the angle required for a general account of sentence adverbs. It is not, as he claims, that sentence adverbs and predicate adverbs cannot be conjoined; rather the infelicity of his examples results from conjoining an adverb which cancels assertoric force with one that does not: * 'John passionately and presumably loved Mary'. Conjoining two non-assertive adverbs is admissible, e.g., 'allegedly and hopefully . . .' , or 'conceivably and preferably . . .'. Likewise, we can conjoin two assertive adverbs such as 'uncontestably but unwisely . . .', or 'obviously and cleverly . . .' .

Sentence adverbs, both disjuncts and conjuncts, subordinated to a main clause, belong to the larger class of modifying expressions which includes not only other subordinators like the sentence adverb 'if', but also conjunctions like 'and' and 'but', as well as the disjunction 'or'. In view of their roles as coordinators, these are also to be brought within the general explanatory scheme for this class of expression. With both 'A, *if B*' and 'A *or B* ', we have a cancellation of assertoric force, not only of *B*, with which the modifier is coupled,

but also of *A*, to which the entire modifying expressions, 'if B' and 'or B', are affixed. With 'A *and B* ' and 'A *but B* ', we have a modification of sorts–an *addition*–conveying a continuation of theme, or a contrast with what has gone before (cf. Rundle, 1983: 386-406). The difference being that assertoric force is not cancelled. With a statement like "Conceivably, Major will soon call an election" neither the main clause nor the entire statement is asserted. With "Major will soon call an election or he will lose the advantage", the assertive force of the main clause is also cancelled; however the entire statement in this case does constitute an assertion (of a complex thought). This difference is accounted for by the use of the modifier 'or' in this context (and similarly with 'and' and 'if') to connect sentences. More precisely, the difference is attributable to the difference in what the individual modifiers are paired with. Though sentence adverbs possess a subordinating role, the distinction between subordinate and main, or superordinate, clauses is of no particular significance here: e.g., the subordinators 'although' and 'because' behave like the coordinators 'and' and 'but' with respect to their effect on assertoric force.

Sentence adverbs may be regarded as a species of *operator*, but not of a truth-functional or truth-conditional variety. Insofar as they effect a cancellation of force, they perform an operation of sorts–upon a linguistic act, not on a sentence. Truth-evaluable operators are explicit in character, whereas sentence adverbs operate *in*explicitly. What I mean is that sentence adverbs *signal*–in a way which is open to view–but do not *say* what their contribution to the meaning of an utterance is, in much the same way that verbal mood, word-order, punctuation and intonation together signal the force with which a

sentence is uttered, or the formulaic 'Cheerio!' conveys that the speaker is parting. The final refuge for Frege and Dummett's catch-all notion of tone rests, not in the difference between a pair such as 'Sadly, she couldn't come' and 'She couldn't come', but between the former and an explicit correspondence form, 'I am sad that she couldn't come'. Both expressions are associated with a similar set of conditions; but it would be inapposite to portray this as two expressions identical in truth-conditions and differing merely in tone, simply because, among other things, it is incorrect to ascribe necessary and sufficient conditions for *truth* to an entire utterance containing a sentence adverb.

Looking at the larger class to which sentence adverbs belong, we can see that conjunctions and conjuncts, which generally fall outside the scope of force-indicators, also share this inexplicit character. As noted, some members of the larger class signal a relation between sentences, or clauses. 'But' signifies a contrast with what has gone before; the conjunct 'however' signifies a contrast coupled with concession; and 'moreover' signifies reinforcement. Relational character similarly belongs to, e.g., 'because', 'although' and 'since', and it appears likely that this treatment can be extended to at least the subclass of conjuncts including 'first', 'in addition', 'in conclusion', etc. Relations, yes; but again, not of a kind favoured by logicians, since these words do not *assert* anything concerning the relation of the expressions they conjoin.

Then, what of the possibility of extending Dummett's canonical scheme to incorporate the meaning contribution of sentence adverbs? In rejecting the possibility of interpreting sentence adverbs as belonging to either the sentence-

radical or the force-indicating component of sentences in which they occur, nowhere have I said that *no* truth-evaluable thought is identifiable. Neither have I claimed that such sentences contain no room for the notion of force. Quite the contrary. On the evidence of the various examples, sentence adverbs present us with a form of words which we might simply *adjoin to* the two basic categories of Dummett's canonical scheme. So, for 'Ironically, the gate was locked' we could simply adopt a canonical representation along the lines of

Ironically -it is the case -that the gate was locked

since there is no denying the assertoric character of the utterance. Naturally, we must also accommodate non-assertive sentence adverbs. For these, we should have to offer something like

Allegedly -that the gate was locked

which may look to be less than illuminating. That no sign for force occurs in the canonical representation is not immediately troubling, for it can be argued that we still have need of the *concept* of force for the explanation of this utterance, in order to acknowledge that the proposition is *not* asserted.

The problem with this idea is that we should be obliged to recognize a distinct class of *hybrids*: expressions which have both an effect on utterance-force and possess sense. This looks entirely implausible, especially given the task of accounting for the semantic character of, e.g., 'allegedly' in virtue of which it differs from other force-cancelling expressions like 'hopefully', 'supposedly', 'apparently', and so on. It is, if anything, even more implausible for cases where a certain amount of compositionality is involved, e.g., 'Very annoyingly, . . .', or 'Surprisingly for someone his age, . . .'.

Any additional hybrid category will not do; so, what happens to the thesis that the meaning of a word is to be explained by its contribution to sentence-meaning? On Dummett's canonical scheme, sentence-sense is represented solely by the sentence-radical. Thus, individual words ought to be represented as contributing to the sentence-radical. But, this is just what sentence adverbs do *not* do. If the sentence adverb 'purportedly' really does have a meaning distinct from that of 'supposedly', for instance, and if neither contributes to the sense of sentences–represented by the sentence-radical–something has got to give. How, then is this meaning to be explained? Here we confront virtually the same problem encountered with *wh-* elements: the sentence-radical approach cannot account for the meaning of interrogative pronouns used in initiating questions. The expressions we have been considering in this section, instead of reflecting a clear distinction between sense and force, actually blur it. The problem stems from restricting the idea of word-meaning to the radical. But it is not only that. It is binding word-meaning to truth which is ultimately responsible for the defectiveness of the approach: even if we somehow broaden the notion of sense to incorporate the various expressions which the sentence-radical cannot handle, we are still left with the fact that with some of these expressions at least, the notion of truth is not only not central, but is simply inapplicable. And so it is, in particular, with the various classes and subgroups of sentence adverbs.

At the level of the individual word there is no difference in meaning between a disjunct such as 'remarkably' and the same word occurring as either an adjective or a predicate modifier. Then, assuming sentence meaning is a

composite of the meanings of individual words, if these do not contribute to the truth of sentences in which they occur, sentence meaning cannot be explained in terms of truth-conditions. And, according to the context principle, neither can word-meaning. That a particular word in a particular linguistic context contributes to the truth-conditions of a sentence is then to be viewed as a special case of a more general notion.

Anyone who concedes that sentence adverbs do not contribute to the meanings of sentences in which they occur in the manner promoted by the sentence-radical model, may yet feel that it is the sentence adverbial expression which constitutes a special case, varying, as it does from the neat theoretical model. This feeling will probably go hand in hand with the view that assertion, or declarative sentence form, is somehow basic. This presumption can be tolerated, if the idea is simply that we proceed by first attempting as systematic an account as possible of what intuitively appears to be a fairly straightforward kind of case, then extending it as far as possible to other kinds of sentences. However, any presumption that other forms of sentences somehow derive from, or collapse into this one, should command little sympathy. Clearly, we must explain similarities where we find them; but we should be wary of similarities which exist only in theoretical explanations and not in the actual language.

How damaging are the counterexamples explored thus far? Where a putative counterexample absolutely refuses systematic treatment, it can properly be regarded a special case not disruptive of the essential soundness of the pattern of explanation espoused. But where an expression forms part of a

pattern, no matter the complexity, if this pattern deviates from that depicted by the theory, so much the worse for the theory. I have attempted to show that the expressions discussed thus far exhibit the latter character. Taken together, they motivate a search for a more comprehensive form of explanation than the one currently on offer.

1.4 Epistemic modals and force: it ain't necessarily so

The grammatical division of adverbs into disjuncts and adjuncts, along with the supplementary distinction based on the cancellation of assertoric force, together provide a useful framework for examining Dummett's views concerning 'expressions of epistemic modality' within the context of the sense-force distinction. Dummett suggests that expressions of epistemic modality ordinarily possess no Fregean sense, and so do not contribute to the truth-conditions of sentences in which they feature. Instead, they serve to signal distinct kinds of utterance-force, on a par with assertions, questions and injunctions. What I shall attempt to show is that, contrary to this view, the meanings of modal expressions are not well-handled by Dummett's force-indicators. In particular, where they can be interpreted as sentence modifiers, they are best explained along the lines of sentence adverbs. More specifically, particular occurrences of modal auxiliaries serve either to modify the verbal element of clauses in which they occur, in which case they belong to the thought expressed by those clauses, or else they lie outside the scope of assertion, and modify the entire utterance. The former behave like ordinary truth-evaluable adjuncts; with the latter, recognition of distinct forces is both unwarranted and unnecessary, since

they can be treated as attitudinal disjuncts which either do or do not cancel assertoric force. As with adverbials that can occur as both adjunct and disjunct, individual modal auxiliaries need not be ascribed multiple meanings. Interpreting individual expressions as contributing to force-indication blurs the distinction between sense and force. On the adverbial approach, this situation simply does not arise. An adverbial account also reveals the inadequacy of the truth-based account of sense applied to modal expressions: for, although disjunctive (adverbial) uses of epistemic modals take us out of the radical, and thus outside the realm of truth-conditions, nevertheless they carry the same base meaning which they possess in assertible contexts.

The chief Fregean thesis concerning force maintains that force-indicators cannot meaningfully occur within the scope of sentential connectives. Yet, in the course of working out interpretations for potential counterexamples to this thesis, Dummett remarks:

> Suppose someone says to me, 'I- A'. I may agree; or I may not agree, and indicate my disagreement by saying 'I- B', where 'B' is a contrary of 'A'. But I may be in the position that I am not prepared to assent to 'A', yet do not want to assert 'Not A' either. In this case, instead of saying, 'I- (not A)', I might say, 'Not (I- A)'.
>
> (1981a: 329)

Ignoring the awkwardness of reporting that someone literally says what is contained inside the quotation marks, it is not immediately clear just what idiomatic expression such a canonical form is supposed to represent. Dummett suggests it might represent a way of expressing "an unwillingness to assert 'A'", in that it provides a way of indicating that there are insufficient grounds for asserting 'A' (compare Frege's remarks on propositions presented as possible,

1879: §4). He goes on to claim that this form is appropriate for representing the contrary of natural language conditional sentences. The chief points are contained in the following passage:

> The modal expressions 'necessarily' and 'may', . . . express what is known as 'epistemic' modality ('for all I know' or 'as far as I am aware'). Expressions of epistemic modality do not ordinarily occur within the scope of sentential operators, and are best understood, not as contributing to the senses of the sentences they govern, i.e. as determining the truth-conditions of those sentences, but as an expression of the force with which those sentences are uttered. When 'may' expresses epistemic modality, 'It may be the case that A' is best understood as meaning 'Not (I- (not A))', ... Thus, on this interpretation, we have no negation of the conditional of natural language, that is, no negation of its *sense*: we have only a form for expressing refusal to assent to its assertion.
>
> (1981a: 330)

First, the claim that epistemic modals do not ordinarily occur within the scope of sentential operators flouts everyday usage. To say that modals are *best* understood as indicators of utterance-force–especially if 'best' here implies *solely*–is simply to ignore other common occurrences. This is easily rectified by saying that modals not occurring on a given occasion within the scope of a sentential operator are to be understood on that occasion as contributing solely to force-indication, while those occurring within the scope of sentential operators contribute solely to the sense of the utterance. But just as with adverbs like 'surprisingly' and 'hopefully', this form of explanation obscures univocity.

Secondly, some preliminary grammatical remarks are in order. Prompted perhaps by an absorption in the workings of modal logic, Dummett somewhat oddly characterizes 'necessarily' as an English 'modal expression', to be paired off with the genuinely modal auxiliary 'may'. In ordinary English, 'necessarily' functions as an adverb, not as a modal verb or auxiliary. It

signifies the necessity of what is expressed by a verb or an adjective, as in 'Uncontrolled development necessarily results in environmental destruction', and 'The jury will necessarily disagree'–the latter revealing an 'emphasizer' function (cf. Quirk, et. al.: 444). There is nothing remarkable about such uses; in these contexts 'necessarily' makes the same kind of contribution as, e.g., 'inevitably' or 'unavoidably'. No special problem attaches to representing this adverb as contributing to sentence-sense in the way provided by the radical. In both of these uses 'necessarily' occurs within clauses which can themselves occur in the familiar unasserted contexts of antecedents of conditionals and co-ordinate clauses of 'either . . . or . . .' constructions: 'If uncontrolled development necessarily results in environmental destruction, why aren't there laws restricting it?', and 'Either the evidence is better presented, or the jury will necessarily disagree'. In neither case can the adverb be transposed to lie outside the scope of the respective clauses without thereby changing the meaning of the utterances.

In fact, genuine cases of idiomatic English in which 'necessarily' occurs outside the scope of such clauses are not easy to come by. Neither Quirk, nor Greenbaum, nor Jackendoff cite a sentence adverbial use. Palmer claims 'necessary' is not used in an epistemic sense in ordinary language, and the logician's gloss 'It is necessary that . . .' is not a possible paraphrase of the genuinely modal 'must' (1986: 58). White observes that "unlike problematic possibility (the possibility expressed by 'may'), probability or certainty, there is no necessity *that* something *is* so, but only the necessity . . . *that* something (*should*) *be* so, or *for* it *to be* so" (1975: 90-91). We have, for instance, 'Possibly,

they left the party separately'; but **?** 'Necessarily, they left the party separately' rings odd.

Apropos the relation of English modals to the modal logic notions of *possibility* and *necessity*, note that the operators '◊' and '□' fall *within* the scope of the assertion-sign, so that formulae of the form '⊢ ◊ A' and '⊢ □ A' are truth-evaluable.* Incidentally, this is so independently of the acceptability of Quine's claim that the role of these expressions as either logical statement- or sentence-operators is reducible to a semantic predicate characterization in which they attach to names of statements (Cf. Quine, 1953: 166-169). Which is to say that even if the standard modal operators cannot legitimately be construed as truth-functional, nevertheless, they are truth-*conditional*, i.e., they contribute to the senses of the larger unit. In any event, it should not be surprising that the operators '◊' and '□' fall within the scope of the assertion-sign, seeing that their quasi-idiomatic renderings, 'it is necessarily (possibly) true that', 'it is logically true (possible) that', and 'it is a necessary (possible) truth that', all fit comfortably in, e.g., antecedents of conditionals. For there to be anything like the function which Dummett regards as constituting a distinct utterance-force, we should have, not merely Quine's 'three grades of modal involvement', but four.

Given the grammar of 'necessarily', it might be felt that a facile switch could be made to a genuinely modal counterpart such as 'must'. However, this expression is subject to many of the same considerations which apply to 'necessarily'. Thus we have 'It must be in this drawer, or I must have overlooked it elsewhere', as well as 'If it must be there, look again'.

This raises two weightier questions concerning Dummett's claims. The

*NB. I am here using '⊢' as a sign for assertoric force, and not as the logical symbol representing syntactic consequence.

first is: if we are to acknowledge expressions of *epistemic* modality as constituting distinct types of utterance-force, why not other kinds of modality as well? In fact, Dummett does extend this view to permissive, or deontic, 'may', assigning to it a distinct force-indicating symbolization (1981a: 332). But if we are to draw any line here at all, where, and how are we to draw it? The second question is this: is there really a distinct form of specifically *epistemic* modality?

The first question is not easy to answer because of the numerous possibilities for categorizing various modalities. The issue is clouded by the intuitively close relation between the notions of modality and mood. As it is, English employs three distinguishable verbal moods–indicative, imperative and a vestigial subjunctive–and the relation between mood and force is not isomorphic. Complications arise because of the possibility (apparently realized in some other languages) of signalling a potentially limitless variety of attitudes and relations, epistemic or otherwise, by changes in verbal inflection alone. Palmer (1986: especially ch. 2) cites instances of languages which mark such things as reported speech, inferences from observed evidence, wishes, hopes, fears, doubts and more. It is unclear, however, based on the evidence he provides, whether we should call these various features 'moods': there is insufficient syntactic evidence as to how these lexical items behave with respect to, e.g., negation and interrogative transformation, especially when the addition of various particles is involved. It is doubtful that we should categorize everything which could conceivably be signalled by changes in the verbal unit as constituting distinguishable moods on a par with the indicative and imperative, with their close connection to utterance-force.

There are a host of proposals for characterizing a variety of distinct modalities, if not moods, for contemporary English. Von Wright advocates four distinct modalities, epistemic and deontic, along with 'alethic' and 'existential'.[8] Rescher adds to these the categories of 'temporal', 'boulomaic', 'evaluative' and 'causal' modalities.[9] Lyons espouses a view which, if not intended to promote the acceptance of a wide variety of modalities, has this as a clear consequence:

> . . . with the following two basic patterns for utterances . . .: *poss. p* [epistemic possibility] and *! p* [deontic necessity] . . . . What is symbolized here by means of the modal operator *poss.* in the neustic position may be realized in the utterance-signal in various ways: by prosodic and paralinguistic modulation, by the use of a particular grammatical mood, by the use of one of a set of modal verbs or adjectives, by the use of a parenthetical word-form like *perhaps* or a parenthetical clause like *I think* in English. The speaker may subjectively qualify his commitment to the truth-value of a proposition that he is more-or-less confidently putting forward in any of these functionally equivalent ways.[10]

Although Lyons here restricts his discussion to epistemic possibility and deontic necessity, everything he says about linguistic elements which signal the force of 'poss.' and '!' applies equally well to all the proposed modalities mentioned above. As he further says in this spirit,

> If the language-system in question provides a grammatical mood whose sole or basic function is that of expressing subjective epistemic possibility, this mood would be appropriately described as the potential mood. It might be in opposition with, not only an indicative and an imperative, but also a dubitative, a conditional, a presumptive, a concessive or an inferential mood.
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> (p. 847)

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[8]1951: 1-2. Alethic 'modes of truth' include: necessary, possible, contingent and impossible. Epistemic 'modes of knowing', include: verified, undecided and falsified. Deontic 'modes of obligation' include: obligatory, permitted, indifferent and forbidden. Existential 'modes of existence' include: universal, existing and empty.

[9]1968: 24-26. Rescher's 'evaluative' category includes: 'It is a *good, perfectly wonderful, bad thing that . . .* '. His 'causal' modalities include: 'The state of affairs will *bring it about, prevent, impede its coming about that . . .* '. He does not recognize anything like von Wright's category of 'existential' modality.

[10]1977: 846. For our purposes, Lyons' use of 'neustics' and 'utterance-signals' exactly parallels Dummett's use of 'force' and 'force-indicators'.

Surely, this casts the notion of modality too broadly? We should have to recognize an in principle unlimited number and variety of distinct force-types on a par with assertions, questions and injunctions. Instead, parsimony motivates us to articulate principles by which we can plausibly distinguish the genuine articles.

Palmer observes that Rescher's two latter categories can be ruled out on the basis of their truth-evaluability (1986: 12-13). Additionally, Rescher's temporal expressions, 'It is *always*, (*sometimes, mostly,* etc.) the case that . . .', are ordinarily understood in a straightforward adverbial (adjunctive) manner, and can thus be counted out. Notice, too, that if criteria for modality rested solely, or even primarily, on verbal inflection, we should be obliged to regard such grammatical features as tense and aspect as constituting distinct modalities. But these are best handled otherwise than as genuine force-indicators. The 'boulomaic' modals, 'It is *hoped* (*feared, regretted,* etc.) that . . .', are also, in this configuration, truth-evaluable; in adverbial form they are explicable along the lines sketched previously.

But, if all these putative modalities can be explained without recourse to utterance-force, why should we seek to do otherwise with epistemic and deontic varieties? The motivation, I suppose, comes from the fact that in English, at least, we *can* identify by syntactic criteria a distinct class of modal verbs or auxiliaries which pretty clearly are directly associated with both 'epistemic' and 'deontic' uses, as these terms are now generally understood (cf. Quirk, et. al.: 83-84, and Palmer, 1986: 33-34). Furthermore, in some cases they are interpretable as constituting an operation upon an entire sentence.

This brings us to the second question, concerning the distinction between epistemic and deontic modality. Dummett's expressions of 'epistemic modality', e.g., 'may' and 'must', are presumably to be distinguished from their deontic uses, involving permission and obligation. The term 'deontic' enjoys a wide use among philosophers, referring to a particular extension of modal logic, viz., the logic of permission and obligation; and many philosophers and linguists have accepted such a division under different labels. But, although there is no denying that 'must' is frequently used in stating or inquiring about an obligation, just as 'may' is often used in giving or requesting permission, it does not necessarily follow that we must assign to each of these words two distinct meanings. True, certain grammatical and logical peculiarities are associated with such uses: e.g., past forms do not occur with 'may', and it cannot be qualified in the way it can be in a statement of possibility, e.g., by 'possibly', 'probably', 'easily' and so forth (cf. White: 49; also Quirk, et. al.: 104). Even so, it is unclear that these are sufficient to justify assigning them different meanings. If it could be shown that a single underlying formulation captures each version, the distinction could be dropped. In that case, Dummett's claim that a distinct utterance-force is to be assigned to epistemic modals would simply collapse: there would be no distinctly epistemic modals to thus represent.

The search for underlying unity does not allow us to ignore differences. But philosophical confusion arises from a failure to recognize similarities as much as from ignoring pertinent differences. Differences at one level do not preclude sameness of meaning at another, and where an underlying synonymy exists, we should seek to account for whatever differences can be discerned by

appealing to contextual features surrounding the word's use, be they linguistic or otherwise. The possibility *that* something is the case, and the possibility *for* someone to do or to be something, may ultimately be explained in terms of the same general notion of *possibility.* Although it has become fashionable to speak of different kinds of possibility and necessity, e.g., of logical, practical, theoretical, epistemic, metaphysical and deontic, it seems entirely plausible that such putative differences relate to the different conditions under which something is necessary or possible (White: 92; cf. LeBrun's characterization in terms of 'absence of an obstacle of some sort' for both 'can' and 'may', 1965: 93). For a suitably general formula, I suggest that something along these lines does the trick.

Whether or not the preceding line of thought is persuasive, it might be felt that denying the distinction between epistemic and deontic modality offers rather a short way with Dummett's claim that epistemic modals are to be characterized as signalling distinct force-types. Be that as it may, further issues stemming from Dummett's discussion on modality warrant closer inspection, and so I suspend judgment on the matter, allowing for the sake of argument that the epistemic-deontic distinction can be made out. Besides, even if it were generally acknowledged that such a distinction could not be drawn, there might yet prove to be justification for construing them as signifying a single utterance-force, rather than two distinct types.

What reasons are there for thinking that epistemic modals are best understood in the way Dummett advocates? One possibility is this: if modals such as 'may' and 'must' cannot occur in non-declarative contexts, this would

provide good grounds for regarding them as not belonging to any thought expressed in such contexts. Palmer, for instance, says that 'may' cannot occur in interrogatives, a view echoed by Quirk, et. al., who acknowledge, however, that the modal 'can' replaces 'may' in interrogatives (cf. 1965: 119, and 1972: 394 and 98n, respectively). Yet however parsimonious our attitude towards a multiplicity of meanings, the view that epistemic modals cannot appear in interrogatives is simply mistaken. Take the following example: 'Their bedroom light is out. Then they must be asleep.'. Although possibly awkward to some ears, there is nothing ungrammatical about 'Their bedroom light is out. Must they, then, be asleep?'. Or, better, perhaps, 'Must they not be asleep, then?'. Similarly with 'may': 'We may be demanding too much of our students' transforms unproblematically into 'May we be demanding too much of our students?'.

Modal auxiliaries have no imperative forms, so the following examples are nonsensical: * 'Can be here!' and * 'Must come now!' (cf. Palmer, 1986: 34). Nevertheless, 'must', 'necessarily', etc. can occur in sentence-radicals of imperatives. As with other verbal constructions which do not readily admit an imperatival form, we can resort either to periphrasis or to the circuitous 'Make it the case that . . .' . Even though this latter form of words does not precisely correspond to the imperative form of any English verb, it enjoys an everyday use as a way of enjoining action. An action so enjoined can encompass the modality of possibility and necessity, as the following examples show: 'Stack the deck. Make it turn out that the result will necessarily (must) come out in our favour', and 'Whatever you do, don't mention your salary increase. Make sure

that the landlady will at least possibly consider reducing the heating charge'.

Modal expressions, then, sometimes occur as part of an assertible content, and despite Dummett's claim, there is nothing unusual about this. We often wish precisely to assert the possibility or probability of something's being so. This is easily borne out by the observation that these modal expressions can occur in the familiar unasserted contexts of *if*-clauses, as well as in coordinate clauses of disjunctions: 'If it may rain, why don't you take your brolly just to be safe?', and 'We may eat takeaway, or we may microwave leftovers'.

Yet, in many ordinary contexts it can seem unclear whether a modal auxiliary is to be understood along the lines of an adverbial adjunct or whether it should be regarded as a disjunct. That is, not to prejudice the discussion, it may not be obvious whether the modal expression is to be understood as contributing to the meaning of the main clause, or whether it is to be understood as lying outside that clause. For instance, should an utterance of 'Jones may be late' be understood as *It may be the case -that Jones is* (*will be*) *late*, or, should the modal auxiliary be taken as attaching to the verb in the main clause, as in the canonical *It is the case -that Jones may be late*? There might appear precious little to choose between these two alternatives; and yet, these two forms give us something different to judge, in terms of truth-value. Nevertheless, syntactic criteria used to distinguish adverbial disjuncts from adjuncts work just as well for these modal expressions. Moreover, the fact that grammatically, 'may' and its relatives can occur with any verb, lends support to the view that they function primarily as auxiliaries to the verbal element of sentences in which they feature.

This is not to say there are *no* uses of modal expressions which can be regarded as peripheral to a main clause, even though in ordinary English, neither 'may' nor 'must' occurs in initial position. For 'may' we might substitute either 'perhaps' or 'possibly' to achieve this effect. For 'must' matters appear less straightforward: intuitively, the appropriate substitutes are other adverbs like 'definitely' and 'certainly'. Whatever their merits, the expressions 'it may be the case that . . .' and 'it must be the case that . . .', like the adjective paraphrases of the previous section, can occur in, e.g., antecedents of conditionals, and thus, can be accommodated by sentence-radicals. Moreover, adopting a strategy whereby epistemic modals are replaced by adverbs in initial position only strengthens my claim that modals in such a role function like sentence adverbs.

The natural expressions which Dummett regards as substitutable for 'may' in such contexts, i.e., 'perhaps' and 'possibly', admittedly can serve as both adjuncts and disjuncts; but two important aspects should be borne in mind. First, on the basis of their syntax and grammar, these expressions belong squarely in the adverbial category; and, they are accompanied within the same subcategory by similar expressions which signal various degrees of commitment on the part of a speaker to the truth of what he says (cf. Quirk, et. al.: 511). These include 'probably', 'presumably', 'quite likely', and others equally epistemic. Each of these fits the pattern of explanation set out in the previous section, and for each, cancellation of assertoric force is a characteristic semantic feature. Secondly, not being everywhere interchangeable, these expressions are not strictly synonymous with each other, or with 'may'. For

instance, the two adverbs, but not 'may', can appear with 'will': 'James will perhaps be the first to complain'. Negation, likewise, reveals a difference between 'possibly' and 'perhaps': we can say, e.g., 'Fleabiscuit can't possibly win the derby', but not 'Fleabiscuit can't perhaps win the derby'.

The likely Fregean response is to consign such differences to tonality. However, Frege's notion of tone is set beside that of sense, not force. So, it seems that such expressions are to be accorded 'sense', after all, *even in their uses as sentence modifiers.* It appears to follow from all of this that even where modals like 'may' and 'must' can conceivably be construed as falling outside the scope of an assertion-sign, constituting, as it were, a fourth grade of modal involvement, such occurrences can readily be accommodated by an adverbial account. Still, it is not entirely clear that these modal expressions have a genuine sentence-modifying use in English. Dummett's 'If it rains, the match will be cancelled', might legitimately be recast in negated form as 'It may happen that it rains and yet the match not be cancelled', where the expression 'It may happen that' is to be understood as modifying the entire sentence. Yet such an equivalence cuts both ways; there is no compulsion to interpret the sentence in this way. In the spirit of Quine, we might just as well rephrase the negated form as 'If it rains, the game may not be cancelled', and thus render superfluous the interpretation which creates a fourth grade of modality.

A crucial question is this: in the canonical paraphrase of force-indicators, how to represent modality? Dummett suggests a sentence of the form 'It may be the case that *A*' be represented as '$\neg$ (⊢ ($\neg$ A))'. This raises several issues

concerning the meaning and use of negation-signs. First, why adopt the form '¬ (I- (¬ A))' rather than '¬ (I- A)'? Why, that is, treat an utterance of 'Bozo may be the funniest man on earth' as the distinct linguistic act of 'expressing an unwillingness to assert' that Bozo is *not* the funniest man on earth, as opposed to an expression of unwillingness to assert that he is? After all, by Dummett's own lights 'A' and 'not-A' express distinct thoughts (1981a: 316-317); and in the example above, ostensibly, no negative expression occurs.

Dummett pairs the form '¬ (I- A)' with the quasi-natural expression 'It may not be the case that A', adding that, by convention, "definite insincerity would be involved on the part of a speaker who uttered this sentence, although he privately believed that A". This appears to accord with his earlier comment, that "by keeping silent, he may merely be showing that he does not want to tell you what he thinks; but, by saying, 'Not (I- A)', he is at least telling you what he does not think" (1981a: 329). I find this slightly confusing. What exactly is it that the speaker is *telling* the hearer in this case?–that he does not think there are sufficient grounds for asserting A? How is this different from telling the hearer that he thinks there are insufficient grounds for asserting A? Or, perhaps Dummett means that in uttering a statement of this form the speaker tells the hearer that he does not think it is the case that A, where this differs from thinking it is not the case that A. In any case, I do not see that any insincerity is involved on the part of a speaker who utters 'It may not be the case that A' when he privately believes that A. After all, there is nothing wrong with an utterance in which a speaker makes his belief explicit, as in 'Major may not call an election before May, but I believe he will'.

However, by "privately believes" Dummett may mean no more than that the speaker would be justified, and is privately willing, to *assert* that A. In which case a charge of insincerity could justifiably be levelled against him for uttering, e.g., 'It may not be the case that Jones is involved'; for this utterance cannot legitimately be conjoined with 'but, he is'. With respect to *belief*, though, correct use of 'may' leaves it entirely open as to what a speaker's belief concerning the truth or falsity of the proposition actually is. What can definitively be claimed is that a speaker represents himself as believing it *possible* that the proposition is true. But this is so whether we characterize 'may' as contributing to the force or to the sense of the utterance.

What I am trying to get across is the idea that if we are to speak in terms of an act of 'expressing an unwillingness to assert', there is no perfectly general reason to choose 'A' over 'not-A' as representing in every case the thought which the speaker is unwilling to assert. If I say "I may come round for a visit tonight", I express no more unwillingness to assert that I will not come round for a visit, than that I will come round for a visit. If we insist on this formulation, it seems to me that what is expressed is an unwillingness to assert either thought. Obviously, this is not to be depicted as either an unwillingness to assert '(A or ¬ A)'or an unwillingness to assert '(A and ¬ A)'. Rather, the utterance expresses both an unwillingness to assert 'A' and an unwillingness to assert '¬ A'.

How, then, might this be represented? Adopting Dummett's symbolization, we should have '¬ (⊢ A) & ¬ (⊢ (¬ A))'. Unfortunately, this form makes it look as though we have a conjunction of two distinct linguistic acts,

whereas, intuitively, an utterance of 'They may have paid their poll tax' constitutes a single linguistic act. In general, there is nothing amiss in representing as complex an attitude expressed by an utterance; but Dummett's proposal is to be understood as a way of signalling not only a speaker's attitude, but the species of utterance-force as well. So, even though the attitude expressed by this single act is complex, according to the gloss imagined, Dummett's canonical rendering, '¬ (I- (¬ A))', characterized in the way he proposes, is inadequate. Here again, talk of expressing but not asserting an attitude follows the example of attitudinal disjuncts. More importantly still, Dummett's characterization makes essential reference to the notion of assertion, and thus relies upon a prior understanding of this species of linguistic act. This further suggests that the two are not to be placed side by side.

Recall Spector's portrayal of expressions like 'no doubt', 'conceivably', 'hopefully' and 'may', as representing a 'partial withdrawal' of assertoric force. I urged that the idea of a partial assertion is inapposite: strictly speaking, given any utterance, either we have an assertion or we do not. Toulmin espouses an idea similar to Spector's, namely, the notion of a 'guarded assertion':

> The point of the word 'probably', like that of the word 'perhaps', is to avoid just this trouble [the trouble which might result from expressly committing oneself to something when there is reason to suppose that one might not be able to satisfy the commitment]. By saying 'I know that S is P' or 'I promise to do A', I expressly commit myself, in a way in which I also do–though to a lesser degree and only by implication–if I say 'S is P' or 'I shall do A'. By saying, 'S is probably P' or 'I shall probably do A', I expressly avoid unreservedly committing myself. I insure myself thereby against some of the consequences of failure. My utterance is 'guarded'–that is, . . . 'secured by stipulation from abuse or misunderstanding'.
>
> (1958: 49)

I have no quarrel with the idea of certain utterances allowing a speaker to

avoid making a commitment, either to a course of action or to a judgment of truth. Toulmin is certainly right about this. But as far as the notion of 'guardedness' goes, there is a difference between a guarded manner of speaking and a guarded assertion. An utterance of 'Jack may be at Jill's' can conceivably be regarded as a guarded utterance, but can it be a guarded *assertion*? I should say that if it is an assertion at all, then it is a (full-blooded) assertion of the possibility of Jack's being at Jill's. On no account can it be regarded as an assertion of any kind that Jack *is* at Jill's. The qualifier, 'guarded', here suggests that, at most, we have some variety of assertion, not a separate species of linguistic act.

Perhaps we can allow a more generous reading whereby the expression is understood in a hyphenated fashion. The question then is whether 'guarded-assertions' constitute a distinct species of linguistic act on a par with assertions, questions and injunctions. As far as I can see, this idea could conceivably serve for expressions of epistemic modality, although the fact that Toulmin includes under this heading expressions I previously classed as sentence adverbs ('probably' and 'perhaps') again inclines me to the view that epistemic modals are best understood in this fashion.

Nevertheless, Toulmin's view as applied to the Dummett and Frege sense-force distinction is both too narrow and too broad. Too narrow, in the sense that if *every* use of an expression like 'perhaps' or 'probably' is to count as signalling an act of guarded-assertion, there looks to be no accounting for the many occasions on which we want precisely to commit to some degree of likelihood, as in 'It is true that Jones will very probably win the appointment'.

Too broad, in that the class of guarded-assertions will be excessively large and heterogenous, including not only those expressions mentioned above, but also such adverbs as 'allegedly', 'arguably', 'supposedly', 'preferably', 'hopefully', 'evidently', 'seemingly', and the like, as well as complex adverbial expressions such as 'in my opinion', 'as far as can be determined', 'according to Baker & Hacker', and so on. It is implausible to suppose that all of these distinguishable expressions, which by Toulmin's criteria ought to be categorized as 'guarded-assertions', can be accorded the status of either distinct types or sub-types of utterance-force. Rather, we should appreciate the features which, crucially, they all have in common: one, they often lie outside the scope of the assertion-sign; two, they share the meaning which they possess in assertoric main clauses; and three, they cancel the assertoric force of utterances in which they lie outside the scope of the assertion-sign. It hardly requires pointing out that these are the distinguishing features of a certain sub-class of sentence adverbs. So, if this way of construing expressions like 'probably' and 'perhaps' is to be adopted in an account of epistemic modality, it further serves to place them securely in the adverbial camp.

Returning to Dummett's suggestion, consider the following question: if the form 'It may be the case that A' is to be rendered '¬ (⊢ (¬ A)), glossed as an expression of unwillingness to assert 'not-A', then how is 'It is necessarily the case that A' (or, 'It must be the case that A') to be represented? If, 'may' is equivalent to 'not necessarily not', as Dummett appears to suggest (1981a: 330), the representation ought to be '¬ (¬ (⊢ (¬ ¬ A)'. How does this form differ from that of an ordinary assertion? Would double negation-elimination apply, to

yield 'I- A'? If double negation-elimination does not apply to negative force-indication, how is this complex form to be understood, given the characterization in terms of an expression of unwillingness to assert something? Is it a form for expressing a willingness to assert that it is not the case that not-A? That is, if the expression '¬ I- . . .' signifies a linguistic act of *un*willingness to assert what follows, then, presumably, negation of that expression yields one which signals some other attitude–*willingness* to assert what follows, perhaps? Or, how else is it to be interpreted? Pretty clearly, anyone who utters a sentence of the form 'It is necessarily the case that A' commits to more than a willingness to assert that A: he definitely *asserts* that A.

Moreover, Dummett portrays one possible way of disagreeing with the claim 'If it rains, the match will be cancelled' as 'If it rains, the match will not necessarily be cancelled', which he transforms into 'It may happen that it rains and yet the match not be cancelled'. Dummett hopes to extract the modal character from the main clause, and place it outside the entire conditional with 'not necessarily'. This offers a way of avoiding having to give truth-conditions for conditionals of natural language; but whether or not this move is legitimate, the muddiness attending the application of truth and falsity to ordinary conditionals looks to be merely transferred to the realm of force-indication.

Here we may also note a possible difference in the expressions 'necessarily' and 'must'. Suppose I say, "Their lights are on. They must be home." Have I asserted that they *are* home? I think not. It is perfectly in order to say, "They must be home. Let's go see if they are." Whereas something is amiss if I *assert*, "They are home", and immediately follow this with, "Let's go

see *if* they are". By the looks of it, an assertion of 'They are necessarily home' (though of dubious grammaticality) mirrors one of 'They are home' in this respect. The slight difference which it is possible to discern here points to a difference in the conditions governing their respective uses. With 'must' it is a case of making an inference to what one takes, on the basis of available evidence, as the best possibility. Correct use of 'necessarily', on the other hand, signifies that in relation to some circumstance or other, the sole possibility is in fact actualized.

The crucial point concerns Dummett's use of negation-signs in his canonical schemata. In advocating a form like '¬ (⊢ (¬ A))', Dummett acknowledges the need for a special explanation of the use of negation-signs outside the radical, for, on the face of it, this violates the Fregean thesis that signs for force cannot meaningfully occur within the scope of sentential connectives. Dummett proposes a parallel account of permission: 'You may do *X*' is depicted '¬ (! (you do not do *X*)'. Thus, as Dummett observes (1981a: 317), we should have to recognize at least three distinct roles for the negation-sign: one as contributing to the sense of a sentence, one as signalling a distinct force of epistemic possibility, and another signalling the force of permission. As he also acknowledges, this would involve us in a multiplicity of rules of inference, such that some valid forms could not be accounted for by, e.g., modus ponens. This vitiates the idea of negation-signs occurring as force-indicating components. But Dummett apparently concedes as much. Earlier, in the same chapter, he observes that,

> Evidently, all this complexity will be avoided if we take 'not', in *all* its occurrences, as an operator used to form, from any sentence, another

> sentence with a different sense: and hence, by Occam's razor, we must so take it.
>
> (1981a: 317)

This makes it all the more perplexing as to why he *returns* to the suggestion. Presumably, he wants to capture the fact that the remainder of a sentence in which 'may' occurs is not asserted. But in focusing on this, he overlooks the fact that often we want precisely to assert the possibility of something's being the case.

A parallel argument applies to the ordinary and canonical uses of 'may'. If a sentence like 'Madonna may be performing in London' is recast 'It may be the case that Madonna is performing in London' (where the expression 'It may be the case that . . .' constitutes an expression of utterance-force), the same inferential problems arise as with the case of 'not'. For, as we have seen, 'may' can occur in the antecedent of conditionals; therefore, modus ponens could not take us from the premises, 'If Madonna may be performing in London, then she may be performing in Knightsbridge' and 'Madonna may be performing in London' to the conclusion, 'She may be performing in Knightsbridge'.

Dummett claims there is no negation of (the sense of) conditionals of natural language; but his own canonical form belies this. 'It may be the case that A' is to be rephrased '¬ (⊢ (¬ A))', but the schematic 'A' can be filled out by a natural language conditional of the form 'If p, then q'. To say that we have *no* negation of conditionals in natural language looks to be too strong a claim. Possibly, the presence of modal 'will' in the consequent motivates this charge. Absent of any modals, a sentence like 'If his name is John Major, then he is PM' is negated by a true reply of 'His name is John Major, but he is not PM'.

Obviously, this will not do for ordinary conditionals generally. But perhaps Dummett's claim amounts to no more than that there is no perfectly general negation of conditional statements. In any case, I do not know whether the discrepancy between his explicit remark and the form of representation he adopts is merely a careless mistake on his part, or whether it reflects an inherent difficulty with one of these positions. Given his adoption of the form, '¬ (⊢ A)', for 'It may not be the case that A', I think the trouble resides, after all, with the canonical form. Adopting either one of these forms for either of the natural expressions, the same problem arises: we get a negation of an ordinary conditional.

Use of negation signs in force-indicating expressions is equally unpalatable with Dummett's canonical form of permission: '¬ (! (you do not do *X*))'. Given this form, what is the representation of a *request* for permission, 'May we borrow your Mercedes?'? As a yes-no question, the only plausible representation appears to be, '? (¬ (! (¬ do *X*)))', in which case the stricture against embedding force indicators is even more emphatically violated. Apparently, then, permissive 'may' is also best understood as belonging to the thought expressed, as the regimented version, *Is it the case -that we may borrow your Mercedes*, suggests.

Finally, negative force-indicating expressions violate another constraint which Dummett acknowledges. Such uses of negation in the metalanguage cannot properly be regarded as a *conservative* extension of natural language's 'not'. As Dummett implicitly shows, such uses could not be understood by competent speakers, especially without supplementary explanation. But, even

given an acceptable explanation, it is ludicrous to suppose that a speaker's competence with respect to an ordinary expression like 'I may be late for dinner' is attributable only on the basis of an implicit knowledge of a form which deviates from that with which he is undoubtedly familiar.

The obvious move is to abandon altogether the use of negation signs in force-indicating expressions. We might call upon the familiar signs, '◊' and '□', for depicting possibility and necessity, in the manner of modal logicians. Or, so as not to confuse the two practices, we might employ distinct signs, like '**P**' and '**N**'. Because, there is an important difference: modal logic formulae have the general form 'I- ◊ A' and 'I- □ A'; whereas the forms we require must represent epistemic modal expressions as not contributing to truth-evaluable thoughts. Thus, '**P** A' and '**N** I- A'. Since we eschew negation signs in the force-indicating component, an assertion-sign does not appear in the former expression because the thought expressed by 'A' occurs unasserted. But now there is nothing in this to distinguish these expressions from the general form of sentences like 'Hopefully, Porky Pig won the Derby' and 'Unfortunately, Porky Pig won the Derby: '***S**** A' and '***S*** I- A', where '***S***' stands for the general semantic and syntactic category, sentence adverb, and '***S**** signifies specifically those sentence adverbs which effect a cancellation of assertoric force. On this analysis, '**P**' and '**N**' are simply to be interpreted as signifying particular members of ***S**** and ***S***, respectively.

For the most part, I have confined my discussion of English modals to 'may' and 'must'. If Dummett were right, we should be obliged to recognize these two words (along with their cousins 'perhaps', 'maybe', 'possibly',

'necessarily', and possibly 'certainly' and 'definitely', etc.) as signalling two further distinct force-types in addition to assertions, questions and injunctions. However, 'may' and 'must' do not exhaust the field of epistemic modality in English. Besides these two, we have 'can', 'should', 'will', 'have to', and sometimes 'need', as in 'Their lights are on, but they need not be home'.

This group of expressions encompasses a variety of interesting relations both subtle and complex. I do not intend to attempt any detailed description or analysis of these individual expressions, though plainly this is required of a systematic theory. It should be sufficiently instructive for the purposes of this section to point out that, unlike the case with the interdefinable operators of modal logic, no simple 'opposites' can be paired off within this group. Even so, there are ways to express the opposition of one modal auxiliary by the use of others: 'Frodo may be at the cinema' is contradicted by 'Frodo can't be at the cinema', as well as by 'Frodo won't be at the cinema'. 'Gandalf must be blowing smoke rings' is opposed by 'Gandalf may not be blowing smoke rings', as well as by statements claiming that he *will not* be, or that he *cannot* be blowing smoke rings. Clearly, there is no transitive relation; so 'will' and 'may' cannot be paired off, and neither can any other of the members of this group. As signalling epistemic relations between the speaker and the truth of (the assertible content of) his statement, 'can', 'may', 'should', 'must' and 'will' represent a *gradient* of commitment–another reason why any attempt to employ negation signs to represent their interrelationships in sentence-modifying uses is wholly inapposite.

I have also ignored the past forms, e.g., 'could', 'might' and 'would'.

Quirk, et. al. observe that in present tense contexts, for example, these occur with a different meaning from that of their corresponding present forms (1972: 104). Where this would affect their role outside of assertible main clauses, by Dummett's lights we should have to make even further elaborations upon our account of their putative contribution to utterance-force. We would have to acknowledge something akin to a subtype of force, perhaps along the lines of suggestions and advice within the general category of injunctions.

The upshot is that far from adding a mere two force-types to our original foursome, we should be obliged, by parity of reasoning, to accept several more. I have attempted to show that this is not something to which we ought resign ourselves. All the fuss surrounding the attempt to press modal expressions into the mould of force-indicators can easily be avoided by adopting the more satisfying and more natural treatment accorded to sentence adverbs. Although this stance is genuinely unremarkable, on the basis of the evidence I think it is the only plausible one to take.

1.5 Conducive questions: isn't it so?

For *wh-* questions the sentence-radical model is a non-starter. But other variations on interrogative theme are equally problematic for this approach. These include questions which are 'oriented' in such a way as to convey a speaker's expectation. So, e.g., "Isn't she Australian?" conveys the speaker's expectation of an affirmative reply. Questions which thus cue an expected answer are called *conducive* (cf. Bolinger, 1977: 24). A question is said to be positively conducive if it signals that an affirmative reply is expected, and

negatively conducive if it signals an expectation of a negative reply. Some care must be exercised here to distinguish between what the speaker actually believes or thinks, and the anticipation of a reply. Normally, these will go hand in hand; but this is not invariably so. Characterized as directed solely towards a possible reply, the implication of an expectation might fall outside the purview of meaning, strictly understood. That a speaker expects a particular reply is ordinarily reliably inferable from his expressing a belief concerning the correctness of sentential content. Hudson, for instance, argues that conduciveness is a matter for pragmatics, not semantics; that it is a matter of conversational constraints, relating to the motivation and point behind an utterance, whether a given question on a particular occasion is conducive (1975: 16-18; for Grice's account of conversational implication see 1989: Part 1). He claims that even simple yes-no questions are variably interpretable as non-conducive, negatively conducive, or positively conducive, depending on the motive attributable to the speaker, based on available contextual information. This unnecessarily complicates matters. I do not wish to say that such conditions have no correlation whatsoever with possible interpretations of a question; what I do claim is that any variability in meaning is reliably signalled by recognizable patterns of stress and intonation–features of utterances with undeniable semantic import.

We must also consider questions which, like 'She's wealthy?', make use of declarative word order. Such questions are commonly used to hazard guesses, to express incredulity, or merely to check whether one has heard another's utterance correctly. Again, intonation contours and stress enable us

to distinguish these uses; in addition, 'echo questions' can be rendered explicit by affixing the words '(Did) you say' (Quirk, et. al.: 408-409). Tag questions like "It's a lovely day, *isn't it*?" and "You aren't busy, *are you*?" are also conducive. More commonly encountered in spoken language, they are easily overlooked if the focus is too exclusively on written forms of expression. A brief look at the basic features of such forms is sufficient to dislodge the sentence-radical model, and to support the view that truth-conditionality provides an inadequate basis for a general account of sentence meaning. These question-types exhibit the implicitly affirmative character observed in *wh*- questions, interjections and sentence adverbs. It is not difficult to see that such questions are systematically related; far from being in any way deviant or special, they all fit squarely within the broad pattern characteristic of interrogative sentences.

In 'Assertion' Dummett says 'Isn't he there?' is *the same question* as 'Is he there?', and attributes the fact that in English we answer both questions affirmatively if he is there and negatively if he is not there to "a quirk of Indo-European languages" (1981a: 317). In Dummett's view, this constitutes an exception to the rule that we should answer affirmatively if the thought expressed by a question is true, and negatively if the thought is false. It is easy to see why one might equate the two questions: their responses are identical; moreover, within the confines of the sentence-radical scheme there is simply no way of differentiating them. Nevertheless, the choice between such forms is not unprincipled: it is not as if 'not' is completely inert.

On Dummett's canonical deconstruction both questions can only be

paraphrased *Is it the case -that he is there.* Cattell suggests that we have here a distinct type of question, a 'NEG-Q' as it were, different from plain 'Q' (1973: 618). But the positively conducive 'Isn't he there?' cannot be recast as *Isn't it the case -that he is there* because of the inadmissibility of assigning negation to utterance force. Neither can we represent this question in the preferred form, *Is it the case -that he isn't there*: unlike the natural version, the canonical rendering is answered negatively if he is there, and affirmatively if he is not. No difference in meaning between these two questions is captured by Dummett's canonical scheme. In Fregean terms we have two distinct thoughts; yet the thought that he is not there appears incapable of being transformed into an interrogative in a straightforward way. This weakens the general idea that one and the same thought can be asserted, queried, enjoined and wished for.

Dummett is well aware of all this. And there is no reason to suppose that Frege would deny a semantic difference here. Predictably, they would appeal to the supplementary category of tone. Katz (1968: 472) characterizes the difference between negative and positive questions as akin to that between 'rabbit' and 'bunny'; and Quirk, et. al. (1972: 399) portray the difference as a matter of 'petulance'.

Nevertheless, the differences are more principled than this. As we have seen so far, Frege's category of tone is little more than a convenient catch basin for any and all features of linguistic meaning not explainable in terms of a contribution to truth-conditions or force. With these four questions we have actually two distinct differences to consider: that between positive and negative forms, and that between inverted and declarative forms. Surely, these are not to

be construed as mere stylistic variations?

Note that the radical is equally ineffectual with questions which exploit declarative word order such as 'Dragonflies have feelings?'. If this question were really equivalent to its corresponding inverted form, 'Do dragonflies have feelings?', by parity of reasoning the pair 'Don't dragonflies have feelings?' and 'Dragonflies don't have feelings?' should likewise be equivalent. And if the positively and negatively oriented questions are also equivalent, all four must be so. Clearly, these four sentences, although similar, are not synonymous. For one thing, they do not invariably accept identical responses. E.g., a bare 'Yes' answer to the last question is commonly felt to be sufficiently ambiguous or confusing as to require elaboration. Does it mean 'Yes, that's right', or 'Yes, they do'?

The basic differences may conveniently be charted as follows:

Question	Speaker presumes	Circumstances suggest	Expected reply
Did Arsenal play?	neutral	neutral	neutral
Didn't Arsenal play?	yes	no	neutral
Didn't Arsenal play?	yes (emphatic)	no	yes
Arsenal played?	no[11]	yes	neutral
Arsenal didn't play?	neutral	no	neutral

This serves as only a crude guide, of course. Stress and variations within intonation contours affect the interpretations, though not to the extent that an overall pattern is obscured: such variables themselves conform to recognizably standard patterns.

The chief objection to an appeal to tone is that it strips 'not' of its

[11]Ignoring simple echo questions and guesses.

customary sense. Although we may find that this adverb performs a different *function* in such conducive contexts, I am more than a little reluctant to concede that it undergoes a substantial change of meaning from 'Arsenal didn't play' to 'Didn't Arsenal play?'. Rundle suggests that 'not' exhibits a common character in these sentences and in its uses in assertoric contexts: since, in general a negative statement has a better chance of being true, one is less likely to be voiced for the purpose of presenting new information; thus,

> . . . a use to *correct* takes over as the more likely: we counter a belief, or expectation, which we take to be mistaken. In putting the question, 'Did your cousin not ring?' we are asking whether a negative form is so, a form that may be supposed to have arisen in opposition to the unnegated version, so it is like asking whether a contradiction of someone's claim is correct. Hence the suggestion that we are querying a presumed–indeed a presumptive–truth, so that the question, 'Did your cousin not ring?', has the force of 'Did your cousin not ring after all?'.
>
> (1990: 86)

I am not persuaded that Rundle has got it exactly right. His saying that with the question, "Did your cousin not ring?", we ask whether a negative form is so, suggests that we answer affirmatively if it is. But if the cousin did not ring, we do not answer "Yes", or even "That is so": like "That's right", these corroborate the correctness of the speaker's presumption that the cousin did ring. Rundle is right in holding that both forms containing negation carry an implication that the presumption itself is what is being queried; but this appears to run counter to what he says about the negative form. In any case, this much does not yet account for the meaning of 'not'. In the rough chart above I include a class of conditions consisting of what 'circumstances suggest'. For instance, with "Didn't Arsenal play?" we can infer that something suggests to the speaker (the possibility) that, *contrary to his presumption*, Arsenal did not play. What is not

easy to determine in every case is whether such an implication is strictly part of the meaning of the question, or whether it belongs to the realm of conversational conventions. Rundle's talk of "a *use* to correct" (my emphasis) on the part of 'not' strikes me as a characterization of one *function* of this word which possibly belongs to this latter category.

As mentioned earlier, Cattell suggests that 'not' in the host clause belongs to the questioning element, effecting a negative question-type. He proposes that the polarity of this questioning element contrasts with the host clause expressing the speaker's presumption. I have already ruled out the possibility of a negative force-indicator; my own suggestion is that whether or not the middle column above corresponds to any ingredient of meaning, the use of negation in these interrogative contexts simply conveys an opposition between what the speaker presumes and what circumstances suggest.

This might be brought out more clearly by comparing paraphrases obtained by prefixing the words 'is it true (that)' and 'isn't it true (that)' to these questions. For starters, the nonconducive 'Did Arsenal play?' cannot be paraphrased as 'Is it true that Arsenal played?', since the latter carries a suggestion that they did play–a feature which makes it more appropriate as a paraphrase of the declarative 'Arsenal played?'. 'Didn't Arsenal play?' reads as 'Isn't it true that Arsenal played?', whereas 'Arsenal didn't play?' reads 'Is it true that Arsenal didn't play?': the latter but not the former is neutral with respect to a speaker's presumption. Both carry a suggestion that Arsenal did not play, but the latter is more explicit about this. In general, it is to be preferred when someone has actually voiced a claim that Arsenal did not play, whereas with the

former question no more than a presumption on the part of the speaker is required.

More difficult to differentiate are 'Didn't Arsenal play?' and 'Arsenal played, didn't they?'. Tag questions, following a similar pattern, likewise defy the sentence-radical scheme. The most common exhibit 'reverse polarity' between host clause and tag: e.g., 'Arsenal played, didn't they?', and 'Arsenal didn't play, did they?'. Such tags also commonly occur with imperatives: e.g., 'Take a seat, won't you?' and 'Be quiet, can't you?'. Although linguists' refrain that theoretically-minded philosophers insufficiently attend to details of linguistic usage sometimes finds a target, philosophers have in no way cornered the market. Philosophers are not alone in delivering erroneous judgments from within the clutches of some theory or other.

For instance, Sinclair states that among the mandatory features of reverse polarity tags–'checking tags'–are a pronoun which refers to the host clause's subject, a repeated predicate with auxiliary, and the absence of any other element of structure (1972: 75). But, although uncommon, perhaps, the sentence, 'You wanted a cheeseburger, wasn't it?', is not exceptional. Both Arbini and Lakoff regard tags of matching polarity as either irregular or ill-formed (1969: 13-14, and 1969: 141-142, respectively); a view easily refuted by examples like 'So you want to pretend, do you?' and 'Oh, she's not coming, isn't she? Well, we'll see about that!'. Arbini claims further that negative imperatives cannot take tags, so that sentences such as 'Don't (never, scarcely, rarely, etc.) bring me a slab, will (won't) you?' are unsatisfactory to one degree or another (1969: 207). But 'will' seems innocent enough, especially with falling intonation

on the tag: 'Don't make a noise, will you?'. In any case, he completely ignores the possibility of tagging imperatives in other–perfectly ordinary–ways, e.g., 'Never enter without knocking, understand?', or 'Don't ever say that, okay?'. A similar claim vitiates Cattell's claim that performatives never take tags (1973: 621-622). I have not come across any of these in the literature, but note that many other forms of interrogative tags are common: e.g., 'right?', 'all right?', 'yes?', 'no?', 'correct?', 'you know?', 'agreed?', 'don't you think?', etc. Even some performative verbs accept fairly straightforward tags: 'I propose (demand, advocate, suggest, etc.) we eat later, shall we?'. Cattell also wrongly claims that as an echo question, a tagged question (host clause plus tag) must be of matching polarity, so that one cannot reasonably utter the sentence, 'Claude is rich, isn't he?, in response to someone's statement that Claude is rich (1973: 615). But by stressing 'is' and using *falling* intonation on the tag the hearer actually conveys his agreement with the statement: '(Yes) Claude IS rich, ISn't he?'.

So much for inattention to detail. One possibility Dummett might advance naturally suggests itself: tag questions might simply be construed as two separable utterances. So, e.g., an utterance of 'Pass the milk, will you?' could be rendered as the injunction "Pass the milk!" followed by the question "Will you pass the milk?". Unfortunately, this way of representing the tagged imperative masks the overall force of the original, where the tag softens the impact of the demand, effecting a form of request. As Sinclair shows, tags can be viewed as part of a single, *two-part* clause (1972: 75-76). E.g., the silent stress (or punctuation, in written form) which marks a syntactic break between separate

clauses in, e.g., 'Mary is coming round tonight; I'm not', 'Mary is coming round tonight; isn't Henry?', 'Mary is coming round tonight–should she?', or 'Mary is coming round tonight–isn't she a dear?', is unnecessary between host clause and tag.

This might prompt a similar suggestion that the tagged imperative be interpreted simply as an inversion of 'Will you pass the milk?', since commonly this is voiced as a request, rather than a simple, direct question. However, for some sentences the proposed interrogative reduction is simply ungrammatical: e.g., 'What a ruckus they're making, aren't they?' and 'How lovely it all seems, doesn't it?' cannot be rephrased as 'Aren't they making what a ruckus?' and 'Doesn't it all seem how lovely?' (cf. Huddleston, 1970: 220). Similarly with 'You don't have a light, I don't suppose?'. Furthermore, with 'Find your sister, can't you?', the corresponding interrogative 'Can't you find your sister?' marks a change in verbal mood, as can be seen from the fact that a reply of "No" to the former defies the injunction, whereas with the latter in most circumstances "No" simply conveys one's inability to find the sister. Finally, the proposal would construe as equivalent the sentences, 'She is brilliant, isn't she?' and 'She isn't brilliant, is she?': both being reductively cast as 'Is she not brilliant?'. Yet, even were the reduction supportable, Dummett's sentence-radical model would still be incapable of handling the conduciveness associated with negative interrogative form.

Naturally, tagged sentences are somewhat more complex than untagged ones; but they do not mark a departure from the basic pattern. In particular, the role of 'not' is explicable in the same terms as before. Failure to acknowledge

its role leads Arbini to claim that use of 'not' in tagged imperatives is completely optional (1969: 206-207)–as if no difference whatsoever is made by, e.g., 'won't you?' as opposed to 'will you?'. Lakoff (1972: 914-915) observes that 'Come in, will you?' is less polite than 'Come in, won't you?; and Quirk, et. al. (1972: 813) add that the latter uttered with falling intonation on the tag represents an intermediate degree of insistence between the two. This suggests merely a kind of stylistic variability. Lakoff attempts to account for a difference in politeness in terms of conversational rules; but all of this obscures the univocity of 'not'. I say that with use of negative tags a speaker acknowledges a suggestion or presumption of countervailing reasons why the hearer will not comply, and this explains the air of greater politeness or diminished insistence the negative tag is felt to impart. Once again we see a contradiction between a speaker's expectation and what 'circumstances suggest'.

So, what is the difference between 'Didn't Arsenal play?' and 'Arsenal played, didn't they?'? The difference is probably easier to see in an imperative pair like 'Won't you sit down?' and 'Sit down, won't you?'. As pointed out above, the tag effects a modification of the host clause's imperative force, and things are much the same with declarative clauses. Declarative clauses may be characterized as expressing a proposition, the assertive character of which is modified by an interrogative tag. Lakoff is near the mark on this point when she says that the effect of tags in such instances is "to soften a declaration from an expression of certainty, demanding belief [from the hearer], to an expression of likelihood, merely requesting it" (1972: 917). This is near the mark, I say, but no bull's eye. Ignoring the reference to conversational demands placed on the

hearer, Lakoff is right that the proposition undergoes modification. Only, it is not that any supposed 'expressive' character of declarations changes; rather a tag cancels the usual assertoric commitment to factuality, leaving only the expression of belief. This is true of matching tags such as 'She's funny, is she?', whose host clause presents us with a belief which, in the general case, belongs to someone *other* than the speaker. Similarly with negative host clauses. With 'You're not going to Manchester, are you?', ordinarily two questions are distinguished: one with rising intonation on the tag, the other with falling. I think it is actually possible to differentiate three distinct–though closely related–interpretations, paraphrased as nearly as may be in written form by the following sentences:

(1) Oh, no! You're NOT going to MANCHESTER, are you?
(2) Come now; you're not REALLY going to Manchester, now ARE you?
(3) Say, you're not going to Manchester, by any chance, are you?

The first expresses the speaker's emphatic *dis*belief, or possibly even the belief that the hearer ought *not* go to Manchester, while the second conveys the speaker's belief that the hearer is not really going to Manchester. But with the third, I do not think we can say definitively that the speaker represents himself as believing the hearer to be going to Manchester. What does seem appropriate to say is that the occurrence of 'not' in this linguistic context conveys that the speaker does *not* believe the hearer to be going to Manchester; thus, we get an interpretation along the lines of 'I don't suppose you're going to Manchester, are you?'. The reason for this, I think, is this: a common observation concerning question-tags is that they cannot be formed on interrogative sentences; thus the incongruity of * 'Did Arsenal play, didn't they?'.

But an interesting feature of (3) is that the host clause is spoken with a kind of rising tone suggestive of a query; and this is why even the implication of belief is cancelled.

The difference, slight as it is, between 'Refined sugar is unhealthy, isn't it?' and 'Isn't refined sugar unhealthy?' comes down to this: while both convey a presumption on the part of the speaker, one which runs counter to what circumstances suggest, the former also gives expression to an actual *belief*. The difficulty one naturally feels in attempting to articulate the difference between these two forms, then, coincides with the corresponding closeness of beliefs and presumptions.

Now, whatever the correct account of negation for the questions we have been considering, I submit that something along these lines is what we ought to be looking for.[12] To repeat: no expression should be judged idiomatic until the possibility of a principled account of its use is refuted. The fact that variations in interrogative form have without exception been accompanied by systematic differences in meaning lends additional backing to the postulation of a close connection between form and meaning, even if a one-one correlation is not necessarily in the offing.

1.6 Imperatives: make it so!

If Dummett's canonical scheme looks especially suited to simple declarative sentences and their interrogative inversions, the same cannot be

[12]Note that conduciveness is associated not only with word-order and 'not', but is a feature of negative and positive forms more generally: compare 'Did anyone call yesterday?' with 'Did someone call yesterday?', and 'Has the coach left yet?' with 'Has the coach left already?'.

said of its aptness for imperatives. The most common type of imperative sentence differs from both declaratives and interrogatives in having no (explicit) subject–a feature of some consequence for the radical. According to Quirk, et. al., "it is implied in the meaning of a command that the omitted subject of the imperative verb is the 2nd person pronoun *you*" (1972: 403). This intuitive truth is confirmed by tag questions ('Do it, will you?'), and the unacceptability of any reflexive pronoun other than 'yourself' or 'yourselves' as object ('Behave yourself!'). But explicit forms like 'You be quiet!' and 'Somebody open this door!' are no better off: the canonical expression for imperative force, *Make it the case . . .*, fails to capture this indexical feature of imperative sentences. This is not the only problem which imperatives present for Dummett's scheme; but it is one which I believe has not been fully appreciated by proponents of truth-conditional semantics. I hope to show why the belief that either truth- or compliance-conditions are fully accounted for by the familiar form of regimentation is ill-founded.

Quirk, et. al. inform us that imperative sentences are expressed with imperative finite verbs (the base form of the verb, without endings for number or tense), which are severely restricted as to tense, aspect, voice, and modality (1972: 403). For instance, there is no tense distinction, and–supposedly–no perfect aspect, and only rarely does the progressive occur: e.g., 'Be studying when your mother returns'. Combinations with 'stative non-agentive verbs' (as opposed to dynamic verbs) are said to be incongruous: e.g., 'Sound louder!', and 'Know the answer!'. Yet their corresponding regimentations, *Make it the case -that you sound louder*, and *Bring it about -that you know the answer*, do

not offend, especially since they carry the implication of possible future compliance along the lines of 'Know the answer by tomorrow!', rather than the more immediate compliance ordinarily associated with non-regimented imperatives. Still, both of the above are perfectly acceptable as expressions of wishes, the natural interpretation of imperatives enjoining action felt to be beyond the capacity of the hearer to carry out–an observation which applies to a legitimate use of perfect aspect with imperatives, as in 'Don't have told her before I get home!'. In any case, no illegitimacy attends the imperatives, 'Know that we care for you' and 'Sound the alarm!'–although these might be interpretable as dynamic verbs here.

Despite (or perhaps because of) the simplicity of Dummett's proposed scheme, difficulties of detail threaten its purported symmetricality. The force-indicator glosses, *Make it the case . . .*, *Bring it about . . .*, or even *! (. . .)*, fail to capture the fact that it is the subject addressed who is to comply with the injunction. They leave open the possibility that the addressee may indirectly bring about the desired state of affairs by, e.g., getting *someone else* to perform the specified action–a response which, in general, does not count as compliance. Consider again the basic representational scheme:

(1) The bin is empty. (1a) *It is the case -that the bin is empty*
(2) Is the bin empty? (2a) *Is it the case -that the bin is empty*
(3) Empty the bin! (3a) *Make it the case -that the bin is empty*

The problem is to show how the Fregean sense of (3) can possibly be represented as identical to that of both (1) and (2), while at the same time respecting its implicit indexicality. E.g., should (3) be regimented as either of the following two?

(3b) *Make it the case -that the bin is emptied by you*

(3c) *Make it the case -that you empty the bin*

Or, should the subject be relocated with the force-indicator, as in (3d)?

(3d) *You make it the case -that the bin is empty*

Unfortunately, these are all unsatisfactory, for the desired symmetry is lost. Not only have we the additional verbal modifier phrase 'by you' in (3b), or the additional subject term 'you' in (3c), but more importantly, the main verb undergoes change. In (3b) the present participle, 'is emptied', is the passive form of the present indicative verb; whereas in (1a) and (2a) it occurs as a predicate adjective–a difference which is more obvious in (3c). Thus, the thoughts differ. Yet, this is just what is to remain constant across different speech-acts. In light of such stark grammatical differences, it is difficult to see how the regimented versions can be regarded as being not only semantically equivalent to their natural counterparts, but also as showing in what our ordinary understanding of the latter consists.

On the other hand, (3d) extracts the element of compliance by the subject from the sense of the imperative, and represents it as contributing to the force with which the sentence is uttered. This manoeuvre has the rather bizarre consequence that sentences such as '*Someone* make it the case that . . .', '*Everyone* make it the case that . . .', and '*Jane* make it the case that . . .', etc., comprise recognizably distinct subclasses of imperatives–subclasses wholly unlike those made up of legitimate varieties of imperatives such as advice, suggestions, instructions, orders, commands, etc. Worse, being devoid of sense, the second-person pronoun must possess different meanings in 'You

stop that!' and 'Do you know how to tango?'. It may be tempting to think of this particular element of compliance as a matter of *conversational* convention; but I think this can be resisted on the grounds that an injunction is in general frustrated if the speaker adds 'but I don't want *you* to do it'.

It is unclear whether any formal framework, such as that constructed by McGinn (1977: 308), can overcome this dilemma–especially since he explicitly acknowledges that his formal clauses do not adequately handle indexicality. It might be worth a brief look at the dilemma. Attempting to respect the constraints of a Tarski-Davidson truth-theory while accommodating Frege's intuition that non-indicatives are not truth-evaluable, McGinn represents mood (force)-indicators as predicates. His theorem for closed imperatival sentences reads,[13]

Fulfilled (^Make it the case that A^ at *t*) ≡ It is made the case that ^A^ is true at *t*

If we regard 'by you' as belonging to A,[14] then while the formula might succeed as a representation, in terms of fulfillment-conditions, of the sense of an imperative taken on its own, just as before sameness of content is lost

[13]McGinn actually provides two different versions: one, a paratactic treatment along Davidsonian lines; the other (above), an operator treatment which retains an explicit connection to truth. I have chosen to examine only the operator treatment here because it more nearly resembles Dummett's view of force-indicators as (unary) sentence operators, and his view of content as determined by compliance-conditions. McGinn opts for a *fulfillment* predicate rather than one of either *obedience* or *compliance*, but feels that nothing much hangs on the choice. He notes that "obedience requires that the addressee make the demonstrated/embedded indicative true intentionally under that description; fulfillment allows it to be made true unintentionally." In light of what I have been arguing, fulfillment strikes me as being somewhat less appropriate for just this reason. Obedience, on the other hand, seems too strong, given the use of imperatives in requests, instructions, advice, etc. Compliance strikes me as being perhaps the most natural way to characterize 'conditions' associated with imperatives generally.

[14]I.e., 'by *y* ': '*y* ' ranges over addressees of imperative utterances, i.e. over referents of their grammatical subject expressions.

between assertions that-A and questions whether-A.[15] If instead we position 'by *y* ' outside the expression 'A' on the left-hand-side (but *within* the quoted *sentence* where it intuitively belongs) and thus outside 'A' on the right-hand-side, along with '*t* ',[16] as in:

Fulfilled (^Make it the case that A, by *y* ^ at *t*) ≡ It is made the case that ^A^ is true by *y,* at *t*

we obscure the fact that the unregimented imperative is addressed to *y.* The left-hand-side's 'Make it the case that A, by *y* ' fails to capture this feature of (tokens of) the sentence; moreover, this expression is of dubious 'grammaticality'. The conditions given by the right-hand-side still fail to reflect the fact that the addressee, specifically, is to perform the requisite action, and not merely 'make it the case that ^A^ is true'–something which he can accomplish in any number of ways unconnected with the specified action.

Another thought might be to recast the imperative as:

Fulfilled (^*Y* make it the case that A^ at *t*) ≡ *Y* makes it the case that ^A^ is true at *t* .

Here we capture a shared content, A, among injunctions, assertions and

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[15]The regimented version of assertions in terms of a truth predicate, though not specified by McGinn, would presumably read as the more-or-less familiar

True (^It is the case that A^ at *t*) ≡ It is the case that ^A^ is true at *t* .

However, it is not obvious what predicate would satisfy the Davidson-Tarski truth-theoretic constraints while respecting Frege's *later* view that sentential questions, at least, *are* truth-evaluable. Merely replacing the internal assertion on the left-hand-side with its corresponding sentential question while retaining the truth predicate would show that the content, or truth-conditions were identical, but it would not reveal in what the difference between the assertion and its corresponding sentential question consists. For that we need a distinct predicate.

[16]I.e., placing '*y* ' in this formulation alongside, and on the same level as '*t* ' would only cloud the fact that the subject of the command is clearly and strictly implied, whereas the time of compliance is in general *not* strictly implied *by the form of words used in the unregimented sentence.* Any temporal implication can only be inferred from the context of a particular occasion of utterance. In an imperative which *explicitly* specifies a time for compliance, as in 'Cut the lawn tomorrow!', '*t* ' (= tomorrow) belongs to the descriptive-content, since we can assert as well as query the truth of the same thought with 'The lawn will be cut tomorrow' and 'Will the lawn be cut tomorrow?'.

questions, and it looks as though the conditions specifying what *y* is to do match pretty well on both sides of the equivalence. However, these conditions are not given by the expression which constitutes the sentence-radical on Dummett's analysis, namely, 'A'. So, it looks as though on the left-hand-side *y* belongs to the force-indicating expression, as in *You make it the case -that A.* In any case, this formula, too, fails to get round the fact that enjoining *y* to do *x* is not quite the same as enjoining *y* to make it the case that *x* is done.

Perhaps the trouble lies in the fact that the canonical form of words, *Make it the case -that . . .*, already enjoys a perfectly good use in the object language, one that differs in the above-mentioned ways from that of a more direct imperative verb form: crucially, it leaves it open just *how* the addressee is to 'make something the case'. It is worth noting, too, that with some verbs the most natural, if not the sole way, of issuing injunctions is to employ a more roundabout locution like 'See to it that': e.g., 'See to it that Fritz eats while I'm gone.' Yet, for ordinary sentences of the form 'Make it the case that . . . !', the canonical *Make it the case -that it is made the case that . . .* offers little in the way of an elucidation (cf. Rundle, 1990: 136, and Baker & Hacker, 1984: 92, where they scorn the regimented *It is the case that it is the case that it is raining*).

Now, it might be objected that I have illicitly stacked the deck against Dummett's model, employing declarative and interrogative sentences which make no reference to a second-person subject, thus making it easy to criticize the scheme for failing to yield the same descriptive content in the different cases. Suppose, then, we compare instead declarative, interrogative and

imperative sentences which *explicitly* designate the second-person subject. (Naturally, this entails relinquishing the idea that sentences which do not designate a subject can nevertheless express the same thought as those which do.) Take the three sentences discussed by Stenius (1967: 254ff):

(4) You live here now.
(5) Live (you) here now!
(6) Do you live here now?

Their respective regimented versions may be written as follows:[17]

(4a) *It is the case -that you live here now*
(5a) *Make it the case -that you live here now*
(6a) *Is it the case -that you live here now*

Here, the problem lies not with the radical, but with the force-indicating expression *Make it the case . . . .* Nothing has changed: it is not semantically equivalent to the ordinary imperative verb for the same reasons as before. Stenius' 'Let it be the case' fares even worse in this respect. To repeat: there is an important, and quite ordinary difference between enjoining someone to do something which will *result* in something's being done, and enjoining someone to do the thing himself. My servant does not obey my order to wash the limousine if he pays a friend to do it, even if all that I am really interested in is having the limousine washed. If that is indeed all that matters, it would be

[17] I depart here from Stenius' regimentation, but only slightly: in (5a) I opt for the more direct enjoinder 'Make it the case', which follows Dummett's canonical form, rather than the *permissive* 'Let it be the case'. (Dummett comments that Stenius' views concerning the sense-force distinction tally in most respects with his own: 1981: 332.) The second point of departure is also slight, but worth mentioning: I have omitted the end punctuation in Stenius' regimented sentences. Strictly, not only is punctuation unnecessary, it is out of place in the radical, which is to remain constant across different sentences. Punctuation is one of the elements which serves to indicate the force with which ordinary sentences are uttered, and since in their corresponding regimentations force is completely accounted for by what Stenius calls 'modal operators' (Dummett's 'force-indicators'), punctuation marks in regimented sentences–except where used as indicators of force, e.g., '! P' or '? P'–render the regimentations ill-formed.

appropriate for me merely to enjoin him to see to it that the limousine gets washed.

As before, we might hope to remedy the situation by fiddling with the sentence-radical. To be sure, we can supply regimented versions of the following sentences without much fuss:

(7) You wash your hands before dinner.
(8) Wash your hands before dinner!
(7a) *It is the case -that you wash your hands before dinner*
(8a) *Make it the case -that you wash your hands before dinner*

Unfortunately, the members of each pair differ in temporal character, owing to the verbal aspect in the content-giving expressions. Both (7) and (7a) employ a present indicative verb, and are thus naturally understood as signifying a regular action over time: you *always* (or *usually*) wash your hands before dinner. (8), on the other hand, is generally understood to enjoin a temporally proximate action, not some generalized (or quantified) pattern of behaviour; hence (8a) must follow suit. True, such behaviour can be enjoined; but if this is to be effected unambiguously, the intended generality must be made explicit, as in 'Always wash your hands before dinner!'. Since tense and aspect (in English) play a crucial role in the understanding of ordinary utterances, such examples undermine any presumption that regimentations can be expected to deliver sufficiently equivalent sentence-radicals in every instance.

There *is* a genuine involvement with imperative subjects which Stenius' imperative (5) obscures. As I noted at the outset, unless otherwise specified, a second-person subject of the verb is implied; but there is a form of command in which the second-person subject is retained:

(9) You be quiet!

(10) You keep out of this, and mind your own business!

Such injunctions are usually felt to be admonitory and expressive of strong irritation (cf. Quirk, et. al.: 404). They cannot happily occur with markers of politeness: * 'Please, you be quiet!' Though quite transparent, and readily acquired in practice, it is not at all clear how, on the intended deconstruction, this particular aspect of usage is to be represented. Whatever the role of the second-person pronoun in such contexts, to all appearances the only canonical sentence available is that used for subjectless imperatives. Although this may reinforce identity with respect to compliance-conditions, there is a clear difference, subtle though it be, between the conditions semantically associated with 'You come along now!' and 'Come along now!', a difference which completely escapes the regimented *Make it the case -that you come along now.*

Such subtleties only strengthen the feeling that tying meaning thus closely to truth (or compliance) has a skewed effect on the conceptual analysis of 'meaning'. It is doubtful whether Frege and Dummett's ancillary notion of tone can come to the rescue here. Since this category already encompasses such *different* differences as those exhibited by conjunctions, polite forms and 'poetic' words, it might be felt that adding one more variety could not hurt. The fact that politeness markers cannot combine with these sentences might promote their status as mere stylistic variants. However, while such sentences may indeed be ascribed a tonal character, such a characterization by itself is mute concerning the contribution which 'you' makes to the meaning of larger

units.

Besides the second-person subject, a third-person subject is also possible:

(11) Somebody help me!

(12) Everybody hold on tight!

As before, a difficulty attaches to the representation of the subject:

(11a) *Make it the case -that somebody helps me*

obscures the person or persons addressed (Baker & Hacker make the same criticism, 1984: 95); but the alternative

(11b) *Somebody make it the case -that I am helped*

renders the subject term devoid of sense, as before.

Speakers' competency encompasses the ability to employ these expressions correctly; they demonstrate *in practice* a recognition of the distinct conditions with which their use is bound. A theory of meaning whose aim is to show in what speakers' practical linguistic abilities consist is obliged to account for such subtle patterns–a task for which an analysis based on a framework of force-indicators and sentence-radicals appears to enjoy slim prospects.

1.7 Force defects: so-and-so

In 'Varieties of Force' Rundle notes that besides such elements as verbal mood, word order and intonation, individual words are sometimes used to convey the force of an utterance, as when "Would that . . ." signals the expression of a wish (1990: ch. 5, especially 93-94). As we have seen, certain adverbs like 'hopefully', 'possibly', 'supposedly' and 'allegedly' modify, or even

cancel, the force of statements to which they are affixed, and further examples of this kind of lexical 'crossover' are provided by modal auxiliaries like 'may' and 'must'. Imperatives, too, are frequently qualified by markers of politeness such as 'please', 'kindly', 'if you would', and so on, which have the effect of toning down commands, transforming them into requests. Such examples, of which there are many, go against the general principle that individual words maintain a constancy across various linguistic acts, where this is explained in terms of a contribution to determining sentential truth-conditions, as represented by a sentence-radical. The upshot is that there is not always the hard and fast line between sense and force that Dummett's canonical scheme promotes.

Dummett is aware of this: he himself proposes that utterances of the form "Would that . . ." be understood as signalling a distinct kind of force (1981a: 328, and 1991: 115). In one place he observes that

> The judgment stroke [of assertion] conveys an essential ingredient in the conventional significance of a large range of utterances, an ingredient which, in natural language, is not cleanly separated from the ingredient which corresponds to Frege's sense, the determination of the specific truth-conditions.
>
> (1981b: 493)

This is the only passage I have come across in which Dummett explicitly acknowledges the absence of a clear separation between sense and force in natural language. It is not easy to see what should be made of this admission, however; nor of Dummett's own counterexamples to the general thesis. No doubt it is too much to claim that sense and force are never separable; still, the fact that Dummett's canonical scheme marks a clean distinction in every case, where in natural language there is frequently a blur, suggests that, whatever its merits, this model cannot be regarded as providing a basis for the general

explanation of natural forms.

Besides the basic classes of assertions, questions and injunctions (including the subspecies of commands, orders, demands, advice, requests, exhortations, and the like), Dummett's candidates for types of force attaching to complete thoughts are: the hope that it is the case that A, the supposition that A, the conclusion (under a given assumption) that A, and the epistemic possibility and epistemic necessity that A (1981a: 328). This list is not exhaustive. I take it that the best candidate for the expression of hope is the sentence adverb 'hopefully' discussed earlier. We saw that with these, and likewise with epistemic modals, the ascription of a contribution to utterance-force suggests one of two things: either it signals a shift in lexical meaning from contexts in which they are better understood as contributing to a truth-evaluable content, or it indicates that a more comprehensive characterization of the individual expression's meaning is required–specifically, one for which the idea of an association with sentential truth-conditions plays no central role. Dummett's suggestion that 'therefore' be understood as modifying assertoric force resembles Austin's claim (1962: 75) that this word is associated with a distinct 'illocutionary' force. True, as an adverbial conjunct, 'therefore' does not generally belong to sentential clauses (it is not subject to negatability, for instance); but to view this word as everywhere completely devoid of 'sense' seems more than a little implausible. Moreover, on this account we should have to view such linking words as 'thus', 'so', 'then', 'in conclusion', and 'consequently', not merely as devoid of 'sense', but as synonymous, given a similar effect on utterance-force.

Another challenge to Dummett's scheme comes from Austin's illocutionary forces and from Wittgensteinians who stress the 'multiplicity of uses' of various grammatical sentence-types. Here the chief problem lies not so much in sheer numbers as in the overlap between forces and linguistic forms which seems to suggest that the latter is a poor guide to function and meaning. Illocutionary forces embrace not only commands, questions and assertions, but also such acts as descriptions, threats, warnings, predictions, promises, and any act effected by uttering a statement whose main verb is performative. Such speech-acts are indeed numerous; yet even if the former are reckoned as distinct forces in Dummett's sense, so long as each is reliably marked in some standard and recognizable way, then even if they number in the hundreds,[18] or indeed, even if they are innumerable, as Wittgenstein suggests (1958b: §23), they are in principle susceptible of systematic treatment.

Dummett worries about the number of force-types which should be recognized, and cautions against excessive leniency (1991: 120). However, it is doubtful that these two systems of utterance-classification coincide, or even occupy the same level. Indeed, Cohen (1964a, and 1964b), for one, finds Austin's notion of an illocutionary act empty, not least because all illocutionary acts correspond to a performative utterance, according to Austin; but all performatives blur the distinction between meaning and force (in Austin's use of these terms) since on this analysis performative verbs contribute to the force but not the meaning of performative utterances.

Dummett argues that illocutionary forces are not in general to be

[18]Lyons: 736, says there are "some hundreds" of performative verbs in English.

understood as utterance-forces in the Fregean sense (1991: 120-121). On Dummett's view, a hearer may be said to completely understand an utterance of e.g., 'The steps are icy', even if he fails to appreciate that the speaker intended this as a warning, because the intention here characterizes the inferable *point* of the utterance, which is distinguishable from its literal meaning. However, it is unclear whether the two criteria which Dummett offers in support of this (1991: 100) are sufficiently general: in particular, the sufficiency of comprehensibility–that a hearer can be said to understand an utterance only if he understands the particular force it possesses–appears to beg the question for many putative illocutionary forces. Although it may be intuitively clear with respect to such speech-acts as warnings and threats, it is less obvious with, e.g., predictions and promises. Does a hearer completely understand an utterance of 'I will trim the hedge tomorrow', if he fails to recognize whether the speaker intends it as a promise, a prediction, a statement of intention, or simply as a future-tense assertion? With 'The steps are icy', it can legitimately be claimed that if the hearer understands these words, then even if he takes the speaker to be offering a description of the steps' condition, he has nonetheless been warned. Not so with 'I will trim the hedge tomorrow': a speaker cannot be held accountable for not performing the specified action if his words were uttered merely as a prediction. Still, where simplicity is a virtue, Dummett's parsimony is warranted: predictions, expressions of intention and statements about the future, at least, can all reasonably be classed as variations on assertoric theme, distinguishable by the kinds of reason for making them (cf. Dummett, 1981a: 355-356).

Performative utterances represent potentially a greater threat to Dummett's canonical model: according to Austin, they are not truth-evaluable, and so the machinations of truth-conditional semantics simply get no purchase. Of course, the claim against their truth-evaluability is not universally conceded (see, e.g., Davidson, 1979: 117; McGinn, 1977: 309; Warnock, 1973: 81; Lewis, 1972: §8). Moreover, Davidson is surely right to inveigh against any fundamental discrepancy between the semantics of first-person present-tense verbs and their other-person, other-tense variants. Besides, the fact that questions and injunctions are not judged as true or false is no insurmountable obstacle to a truth-conditional account. At the risk of blurring the distinction between sense and force, we might represent specified promises in some regimented form, e..g.: *I promise -that I will trim the hedge.* Likewise with predictions, say: *I predict -that I will trim the hedge.*[19] Or, even more simply, in the familiar style of a pavement sign, 'Warning: icy steps'. However, performative utterances which might be fitted into this format are not unproblematic: the performative verb, on this scheme, must be represented as devoid of sense, and so again we have the counterintuitive consequence that a word like 'promise' possesses distinct meanings in performative and in non-performative contexts ('I promise to . . .' versus 'If I promise, then . . .'). But even if a case for the truth-evaluability of performative utterances can ultimately be made out, we find that some, but not all, may be recast in this form: with examples like 'I quit', 'I concede', 'I protest', 'I apologize', etc., there simply is nothing for a sentence-radical to express. With promises whose content is

[19]Or, in order to keep the first person pronoun out of the force-indicating expression, we might adopt something like *Promise: that I will wash the car*, or, *Prediction: that I will wash the car.*

specified, the sentence-radical ignores subtle differences between the infinitive form ('I promise *to* wash the car') and the form employing a *that*-clause ('I promise *that* I will wash the car'). Notice, too, that the phrase 'to wash the car' does not look to express a genuine Fregean thought.

Dummett sometimes seems to regard performativeness as comprising a distinct species of linguistic act, on a par with assertions, questions, injunctions and wishes. He observes that performatives differ from ordinary assertions in that they do not state something considered as being the case independently of the act of uttering it; but at one place he says that the difference between saying "I promise . . ." and "It was promised . . ." reflects a genuine difference in force (1981a: 334, 335). The aptness of the former characterization does not preclude *tout court* our classifying performative utterances as *statements*, for in the grammatical sense, as Austin noted, this is precisely what they are (1962: 1ff). It is perhaps worth noticing that although it has become commonplace to speak in terms of performative *utterances*, nowhere do we encounter anything which could be called a performative question or performative injunction: examples like 'I ask you whether . . .' and 'I order you to . . .' may indeed have the practical effect of questions or commands; but for all that, they remain statements.

The 'peculiarity' of performative statements resides in the character of certain verbs, and resembles the special character of so-called 'homological' adjectives like 'short', 'polysyllabic' and 'English'. Perhaps a speaker does not *assert* that he is making a promise, but it does not seem amiss to say that this is what he *states*. In reported speech we may say, not only "You promised", but

also "You said you promised", and "You said 'I promise'". Plainly, not all statements are assertions, e.g., "Hopefully, she will emerge unscathed". It can even be maintained that asserting and stating are themselves two distinct subspecies of a more general utterance-class: at the police station, for instance, one is asked to *state*, not to assert, one's name, address, occupation, etc.

Treating explicitly performative utterances as statements in more than the grammatical sense would have the welcome effect of simplifying any general doctrine of the indicative mood (a point echoed by Warnock, 1973: 81). But Grewendorf (1979: 431ff) disputes the idea that such utterances are truth-evaluable, and that they are 'quite normal' statements. He propounds two arguments to refute the view that a speaker not only performs an illocutionary act of some kind, but also states that this act is performed: one, explicit performative utterances cannot be used in the same way as statements about one's actions; and two, explicit performative utterances and statements receive different responses. But neither of these is decisive: some performatives accept the same or similar responses as statements, and some do not. Even were Grewendorf right, there is nothing in this which shows that explicit performative utterances are not statements at all, but at best, only that they are not synonymous with another form. Given the non-equivalence of 'it is true that . . .' and 'it is the case that . . .', it may not be entirely amiss to view performatives in a way congenial to Dummett's programme: *It is the case -that I promise (quit, concede, protest, apologize).* After all, questions and injunctions are not rendered truth-evaluable by the presence of a truth-evaluable sentence-radical.

A further, seemingly unremarked fact about performatives is that some qualifications do yield truth-evaluable statements. Consider the following:

(1) I wholeheartedly promise to uphold the law.
(2) I seriously warn you that that rabbit is dangerous.
(3) I vehemently protest.
(4) I happily accept the nomination.
(5) We warmly welcome you to this firm.

These examples look to be genuinely performative: the insertion of 'hereby', for instance, commonly taken as a marker of performativeness,[20] is equally effectual in such cases. What is affirmed or denied is not performative character *per se*, but performative *manner*, as conveyed by the adverbial modifiers. One problem: if performative verbs contribute to Fregean force in such contexts, then so apparently do these modifiers. Yet, if this is so, how are we to characterize these statements' *negatability*? Perhaps, then, it is better to hold out for an explanation of performatives in terms of 'sense'–where this makes no reference to truth-conditions–than to capitulate to ascriptions of 'abnormality'.

Now, Dummett subscribes to a close connection between linguistic form and force. With imperative sentences, for instance, he says ". . . the utterance of a sentence of a certain form, unless special circumstances divest this act of its usual significance, in itself constitutes the giving of a command" (1981a: 301-302). But Wittgenstein appears to oppose this where he says, "We do in fact call 'Isn't the weather glorious today?' a [grammatical] question, although it is

[20]However, Urmson, 1977: 25-26, presents examples which show that not all performative utterances can contain 'hereby', and that conversely, not all admissible insertions of this word make for a performative utterance.

used as a statement" (1958b: §21). Davidson adopts what is possibly an even stronger stance: he claims that

> Utterances of 'Did you notice that Joan is wearing her purple hat again?' or 'Notice that Joan is wearing her purple hat again' may on occasion simply be assertions that Joan is wearing her purple hat again. And similarly . . . we can ask a question with an imperative or indicative [sic] ('Tell me who won the third race', 'I'd like to know your telephone number'), or issue a command with an indicative [sic] ('In this house we remove our shoes before entering').
>
> (1979: 110)

Quirk, et. al. also join this chorus: they report that one and the same grammatical form of sentence can be used to perform various functions, while, conversely, a single function can be performed by various sentence-types (1972: 386-387). They claim that "I'd love a cup of tea" not only conveys information, but also urges action on the listener; and that "I wonder if you'd kindly open the window?" is a statement according to form, but a command according to function.

I say that Davidson's view may be stronger than Wittgenstein's, because Wittgenstein first speaks of a question being *used as*, or *like*, (*als* in the original German) a statement. He goes on to say that "You will do this" is spoken as a prophecy or as a command (1958b: §21), his query as to what *makes* it the one or the other implying that it is to be thus *identified*. The weaker claim is perhaps less troubling: if sentence meaning and sentence use are not strictly equivalent, then it is possible to concede Wittgenstein's point while maintaining that despite sameness of use, different grammatical forms nevertheless contribute differently–albeit systematically, i.e., with some sort of regularity–to sentence meaning.

The passage from which I have just quoted Wittgenstein requires closer

scrutiny. It begins,

> Imagine a language-game in which A asks and B reports the number of slabs or blocks in a pile, or the colours and shapes of the building-stones that are stacked in such-and-such a place.–Such a report might run: "Five slabs". Now what is the difference between the report or statement "Five slabs" and the order "Five slabs!"?–Well, it is the part which uttering these words plays in the language-game. No doubt the tone of voice and the look with which they are uttered, and much else besides, will also be different. But we could also imagine the tone's being the same–for an order and a report can be spoken in a *variety* of tones of voice and with various expressions of face–the difference being only in the application.

A few points might give us pause. The first is this: Wittgenstein asks after the difference between the report "Five slabs" and the order "Five slabs!". But a seemingly decisive difference stares us in the face: punctuation. What is the significance of the exclamation point?–what is its relationship to the function and meaning of the *injunction*? I am unsure whether Wittgenstein's 'tone of voice' coincides with what is now called 'intonation contour', but what he says about the variety of possible tones of voice seems to suggest that punctuation and intonation carry no *standard*, or repeatable, significance. I do not say that this view can definitively be attributed to Wittgenstein, but it does appear to be consonant with the emphasis he places on functional diversity. Whether or not the idea is Wittgenstein's, it is mistaken.

The idea that a report and an order may both be effected by identical words uttered with identical intonation, that the sole distinguishing characteristic *is* their application, i.e., "the part which each plays in the language-game", appears to lead to a serious impasse. For one thing, how could B ever know whether A was *changing* the game from one of asking and reporting to one of ordering and obeying? In a primitive language consisting solely in building block and number words used in these two ways, there are no reliable linguistic

devices for marking the different uses. In other words, there is no way from *inside* the *language* to distinguish the two activities. We want to say that the activity of ordering and obeying, for instance, constitutes a particular form of social behavior, the full description of which includes the utterance of, and responses to, expressions like "Five slabs". But if we cannot identify the activity of issuing orders at least partly by reference to the utterance of expressions *of a particular form*, then speakers' competence appears mysterious.

Wittgenstein suggests that what makes an utterance of "Five slabs!" an order is given by a description of the activity: A utters "Five slabs!", and B brings him five slabs. B is said to have learned to respond to this utterance in this way in these circumstances. But, then, how is B to learn the distinct practice of asking and reporting? Well, he also learns to treat another's utterance of "Slabs" as sometimes asking after the number of slabs: he comes to appreciate that in certain recognizable circumstances he is supposed to respond by uttering e.g., "Five slabs". Perhaps he learns that sometimes A merely records his responses in a book. But now B arrives at the building site, and A says to him, "Slabs". How is B to understand this–how is he to respond? It could be a question, a report, or an order, for we can imagine that observable circumstances favour no one activity over the others. Clearly, which it is cannot be determined merely by B's *actual* response, because there must be some sense in supposing that he could be mistaken. But neither can it be defined in terms of A's intention in uttering the expression at that particular moment since as Wittgenstein correctly suggests elsewhere, A's intention is itself identifiable only on the basis of his behaviour with respect to the use of the expression (e.g.,

1958b: §693). In other words, A's intention is shown by what he does later, by the way in which he reacts to B's response. As such, A's intention can neither guide nor determine B's actual use of the language.

For one thing, A cannot *correct* B, cannot get him to report the number of slabs, say, as opposed to bringing them to A, merely by repeatedly uttering "Slabs"; for B may simply continue to bring slabs. Now suppose A does manage to get B to stop bringing slabs, and to start reporting their numbers, by conspicuously pulling out his record-keeping book. If B associates this action in conjunction with the utterance of "Slabs" as constituting the asking after the number of slabs, he responds by uttering "Five slabs", say. The difficulty here is that we still have no way of saying, whether from the inside or the outside, whether they have now changed activities, or whether A has corrected B. That is, there is still no way of determining whether A's initial utterances of "Slab" were orders or questions: the actual activity between A and B is underdeterminative.

Wittgenstein's criterion of a language-game appears to lack an adequate account of error. If we suppose that in reaction to B's bringing some slabs in response to his utterance of "Slabs", A wags his finger at B, or frowns, or in some such way tries to indicate to B that he has *mis*interpreted the force of A's utterance, has mistook the activity in which A intended the two of them to engage, the same question arises. For if finger wagging, or frowning, do not carry any standard significance, then how can A be said even to have *this* intention to correct–*by these means*? Once again, how can B recognize their significance? In fact, such accompaniments can be used in just this way; it is

just that where they are understood by both speaker and hearer to have this function, they are rightly to be reckoned *linguistic* elements, analogous to those of standard sign-languages.

Wittgenstein continues in the same passage:

> We could imagine a language in which *all* statements had the form and tone of rhetorical questions; or every command the form of the question "Would you like to . . .?".

No doubt this is true. However, it does nothing to undermine a connection between linguistic form and meaning. In a language in which statements are expressed by sentences of a kind which *we* should call rhetorical questions, such sentences can simply be called statements. If this language *also* possesses what *we* should call rhetorical questions–i.e., sentences which we should call questions, but which bear some distinguishable mark–there is a genuine ambiguity in this language between rhetorical questions and statements. Similarly, in a language in which commands have the form 'Would you like to . . .?', there is no reason to call this form of sentence a question; it simply is *their* form of command. This form of words will possess a different meaning in the imagined language from that which it has in our own; but it will not be such as to cause any particular difficulty of translation.

Now, back to Davidson. Agreeing with Rundle, I, too, think it not right to say that an utterance of the form 'Did you notice that . . . ?' is ever an assertion, or that an utterance of 'We remove our shoes before entering this house' is ever a command (cf. 1990: 88). Both Dummett and Rundle are surely right in associating the supposedly assertoric character of the former, and the supposedly imperative character of the latter, with the extralinguistic, implied

point with which a speaker's purpose in making these utterances on particular occasions is bound (cf. Dummett, 1991: 118-119, and Rundle, 1990: 88). For example, I may say "It's hot in here", or even "Aren't you hot in here?", as a way of prompting you to open a window; but my intending you to open a window is not to be reckoned an ingredient in the meaning of either utterance. It has to do with my *reason for* uttering either sentence–that is, with my reason for uttering a sentence whose meaning is already independently understood. I can only have *that* intention–the intention to get you to open the window by my uttering these words–if these words mean what they do independently of my particular intention on this occasion.

So, too, with Davidson's examples. "Did you notice that . . .?", though it carries the implication–a genuinely semantic one, I would say–of the factuality of what is expressed by the that-clause, as well as the speaker's belief in it, nevertheless remains a question, since a response is called for. This form of words presents us with a condition not shared by a simple assertion of what is expressed in the that-clause. With "We take our shoes off before entering this house" the speaker *may* intend a hearer to remove his shoes; but the hearer's failure to recognize the speaker's underlying intention is not attributable to *linguistic* incompetence (on this point, see both Rundle, 1990: 89, and Dummett, 1991: 118). Quirk, et. al.'s "I wonder if you would kindly open the window?" is not, as they claim, a *statement* functioning as a command: the end punctuation clearly marks it as a question. Even so, it would be wrong to describe an utterance of the interrogative sentence as a question masquerading as a command: the adverb 'kindly' in this context is not a manner adverb, but a

marker of politeness, indicating that the utterance has the 'intermediate' force of a request. In particular, the question-mark, or rising intonation, signals that a verbal response is invited; the hearer is thereby expressly given an opportunity to convey his own desire concerning the matter.

In the end, even if Wittgenstein is right about the primitive language of building blocks and number words, even if there are no explicit markers of force, it does not follow that there could not be such markers, nor that the markers in our own language are without standard significance. Any plausibility which attaches to the idea that primitive language-games can in principle always be distinguished without reference to regularities in linguistic form may be due to the fact that with such examples identity is built in. The simple examples which occur early in the *Investigations* are easily accounted for because they constitute the *only* use of language. As soon as more, or more complex, forms of activities in which language features are conceived, matters become complicated. With a language as rich and diverse as English, it is doubtful that such simple models can take us far. The idea, if it is Wittgenstein's, that nothing short of a complete description of the uses of expressions given in terms of the complete descriptions of the various language-games in which, and for which, they may be employed, is available to us, ignores the conditions with which variations in the many markers of our language–e.g., word order, verbal mood, intonation and punctuation–are regularly associated. There is no call to press for a one-one mapping of form and force, because numbers are not crucial. On closer inspection, what we actually find is a regular association between form and meaning; and as long as various uses can be shown to exploit rather than

to contravene the standard significance of grammatical form, all is well.

This brings us to the chief doctrine concerning force, a principle on which both Geach and Dummett lay great stress. Geach claims that "assertoric or imperative force never attaches logically to one or other clause within a complex sentence, but solely to the whole period" (1979: 230). Dummett puts it even more strongly; he says:

> . . . it is meaningless . . . to attempt to put a sign with assertoric, or any other, *force* inside a constituent clause in a complex sentence . . . .
> (1981a: 327-328. The same claim is made in 1991: 120.)

Thus, according to this view, canonical expressions of the form 'p -> (⊢ q)', 'p -> (! q)', '⊢ p V ⊢ q', '⊢ p V ? q', '⊢ p & ⊢ q', '⊢ p & ! q', etc., are ill-formed: no natural language sentence corresponds to any of these. For instance, an utterance of 'If the tower falls, our lovely pizza is ruined' can only be cast as an assertion of a conditional thought, '⊢ (p -> q)', not as a conditional assertion, 'p -> ⊢ q'. Likewise, imperatives such as 'If you love sunshine, don't move to England' can only be rendered '! (p -> not-q)'.

Dummett claims that the relation of subordinate to superordinate clauses explains why imperative verb forms cannot occur in antecedent *if*-clauses. But Rundle contends that the *possibility* of such an occurrence is not senseless, even if there happens to be no current use (1990: 145). Examples such as 'If you *be quiet*, you might learn something' show that it is possible, at least, to think in terms of a set of conditions whose obtaining is conditional upon someone's compliance with an injunction, even if the expression 'be quiet' is here interpretable as subjunctive rather than imperative.

Still, it is not clear that no such use is made of the imperative in actual English. Consider 'Join the party only if you are quiet': the imperative verb, 'join', grammatically occurs in the superordinate clause; but this clause is typically recast as an antecedent *if*-clause in formal or canonical language. Perhaps Dummett will maintain that such sentences are to be recast as '! (p -> q)', paraphrased as 'Make it the case that if you join the party, then you are quiet'. But this form is also supposed to do duty for sentences in which an imperative verb occurs in the consequent: e.g., 'If you join the party, be quiet'. It is doubtful that changes in the exact location of the imperative makes no difference whatsoever to our understanding of the respective compliance-conditions. We have, I suggest, two slightly different sets of conditions to look at, according to which action is envisaged as enjoined; and this is determined precisely by which verb is put in the imperative mood.

Geach claims that the following sentences are equivalent:

(a) Either do not walk on the grass or wear your Wellingtons.
(b) If you walk on the grass, wear your Wellingtons.
(c) Do not walk on the grass unless you wear your Wellingtons.

This is supposedly shown by the possibility of representing each by the same canonical expression: *Make it the case -that either you do not walk on the grass or you wear your Wellingtons* (1979: 230; Geach actually paraphrases these using Hare's neustic-phrastic terminology, but the difference is irrelevant here). The equivalence between (a), (b), and (c) then, reduces to the equivalence between 'either not-A or B', 'if A then B', and 'not-A unless B'. But these are only truth-functionally equivalent: truth-tables show that we arrive at their respective truth-values differently. On Frege's view, this constitutes a

difference in sense.

Dummett concedes that if the thesis that a sign for force cannot occur within the scope of a sentential operator is not correct, the whole distinction between sense and force comes under threat (1981a: 328). Yet despite his claim about the meaninglessness of certain forms, Dummett again supplies his own counterexamples. For example, he observes that English possesses a form of conditional question, by which a question is asked conditionally upon some other condition obtaining (ibid.: 338-339). He goes on to say that this can be represented by a distinct sort of force-indicating expression with two argument-places: 'If . . ., then (? . . .)'. Aside from the fact that both 'if' and 'then' must then be construed as contributing to force, and thus as differing in meaning from their uses in assertoric conditionals, Dummett's characterization of this form makes it sound suspiciously like a *functional* expression–something which elsewhere he asserts that force-indicators cannot be (ibid.: 315; Dummett follows Frege in defining functional expressions in terms of sense and reference).

With conjunctions, Dummett says that if 'and' were the only logical constant in the language, we could always take it as operating on sentences having force-indicators attached, e.g., '(⊢ A) & (⊢ B)', or '(? A) & (! B)' (ibid.: 336). But he also says that if 'and' were the only logical constant in the language, it would be fundamentally redundant, given our practice of performing a number of linguistic acts in succession (ibid.: 336). Therefore, conjunctions must be represented as, e.g., '⊢ (A & B)', or better, as '⊢ A' followed immediately by '⊢ B'. The latter is preferable, he claims, because of the possibility of conjoining

utterances having different forces, e.g., 'I'm going this way, but don't try to follow!'. Apparently, then, conjunctions can simply be dropped without loss in such contexts. This represents a natural extension of Dummett's and Frege's view that conjunctions such as 'A although B' and 'A but B' differ only in respect of tone. However, if conjunctions possess sense at all, it is more than a little doubtful that the form 'I- A; I- B' possesses the same sense as 'I- (A although B)', because the precise character of the relation between individual conjuncts cannot simply be ignored. In fact, adverbial conjuncts generally, like adverbial disjuncts, are not ordinarily the focus of negation; therefore they ought not be construed as invariably falling under the scope of assertion or any other sign for force. Hence, the plausibility of, e.g., 'I- A although I- B'.

Consider also a sentence like 'Surprisingly, she's wealthy and down to earth', where it is the conjunction of the two characteristics which is surprising, and not either characteristic taken alone. Where does the assertion-sign belong in the symbolic representation? Since sentence adverbs do not belong to what is asserted, the form 'I- Surprisingly (A & B)' is ruled out. Better is 'Surprisingly I- (A & B)'. Pretty clearly, an utterance of this sentence cannot be cast as two distinct utterances, one immediately following the other: a formula like 'Surprisingly (I- A; I- B)' does not even look to be well-formed. Again we see that conjunctions cannot simply be dropped without loss. Where negation does not apply to a conjunction–as opposed to the individual clauses which it conjoins–the internal placement of the assertion sign seems to be the only plausible rendering, e.g., 'Surprisingly (I- A although I- B)'. This also appears to hold for an utterance like "She's successful, but don't follow her advice!",

accurately described as an assertion conjoined with a command (cf. Rundle's example of "a statement conjoined with a question", 1990: 133).

Dummett also acknowledges a difference in meaning between utterances of the form '? (A & B)' and those which cannot be construed as asking after the truth of a conjunction, '(? A) & (? B)' (1981a: 337). The crucial point about linguistic form is that different forms organize matters differently, and can thus reflect differences–often quite subtle–in the conditions with which they are standardly linked. Such is the case with interrogatives like 'He is there?', 'Is he there?', and 'Isn't he there?'; and equally with alternative questions. With disjunction, Dummett is right in saying that an assertion of e.g., 'She's either Welsh or Irish' does not have the form '(I- A) or (I- B)', but rather, corresponds to 'I- (A or B)', since a speaker asserts neither disjunct. The same applies to disjunctions of clauses containing imperative main verbs: these are best understood as '! (A or B)', not as '(! A) or (! B)'.

Things are different with questions. Dummett gives as an example of a question of the form '(? A) or (? B)' an examination question like: "13. What does Frege mean by 'objects'? OR What does Russell mean by 'individuals'?" (ibid.: 338-339). Ignoring the fact that both disjuncts are *wh*- questions, it is really a matter of the conventions governing the exam, or explicit instructions which accompany it, which tells the examinee whether such examples are to count as two distinct questions or a single disjunctive sort. A better example would be an alternative-question like "Is she from Oxford or Cambridge?". Now, what determines whether this is a yes-no question, or whether it is an alternative-question? The answer is quite simple: intonation. Rising intonation

on the end signals that an affirmative or negative answer is sought; falling intonation signals the desire for an answer specifying *which* of the disjuncts is correct. Like declaratively-ordered and negatively-worded yes-no questions, and *wh-* questions, alternative questions are conducive: they convey the presumption that one or the other disjunct expresses what is in fact the case. How do alternative questions do this? Again, the answer is not difficult to find: again it is intonation. Falling intonation, so characteristic of assertions, regularly signals a speaker's belief that certain conditions obtain. With alternative questions, intonation signals that the speaker believes, or presumes, that one or the other disjunct represents the way things stand.

Dummett's canonical sentences are wholly incapable of handling such questions. It is not surprising, therefore, that he regards it facetious to reply affirmatively to the question "Is he in England or America?", meaning that he is either in England or America (ibid.: 306). Nothing is wrong with the answer if the questioner has signalled by use of rising intonation a presumption that the disjunctive proposition correctly expresses how matters stand. Neither is it surprising that Dummett should claim that the question "Is he there?" is the same question as "Is he there or isn't he?" (ibid.: 317). Not only do these differ because of the presence of 'not'; but the falling intonation with which the latter is standardly uttered expresses, albeit implicitly, the speaker's belief that either the male referred to is, or is not, there. It is not that in uttering the former the speaker somehow signals a suspension of belief in the law of excluded middle; it is just that such a belief is not part of what is expressed–whether explicitly or implicitly–by the former question.

Alternative questions are not to be characterized in indirect speech as asking whether A or asking whether B; rather they ask whether A or whether B. Adopting Dummett's canonical style, they have the form: *Is it the case -that A or is it the case -that B.* So either we write, '(? A) or (? B)', or we adopt a special notational device for a force-indicating expression along the lines of '$?_{alt}$ (A or B)', with the stipulation that such questions are correctly answered by, and only by, 'I- A', or 'I- B', or 'I- neither A nor B' (where the speaker's presumption is mistaken). But note: neither of these forms captures the presumption conveyed by falling intonation.

Geach adds his own counterexamples to the thesis that force is not conveyed by individual words or expressions. He avers that in examples like 'Jones is aware of the fact that his trousers are on fire', the expression 'the fact that' imparts *additional* assertoric force to the utterance, so that an assertion that Jones' trousers are on fire gets smuggled in along with the assertion concerning his awareness of this situation (1972: 259-261). Other of his examples are, '*A* has pointed out that *p*', '*A* fancies that *p*', and '*A* is under the illusion that *p*'. Geach calls such examples 'double-barreled assertions', dismissing them as special cases. He claims they are invariably exponible as a pair of assertions rather than as a single conjunctive one. It is perhaps worth noting that as far as 'double-barreled' character goes, the expression 'the fact that' plays little or no role: in cases like those above, it can be dropped without loss. Any extra assertoric character is assignable to the verbs, 'aware', 'points out', 'knows', etc., when accompanied, e.g., by an object that-clause.

Geach is right in saying that this assertive character shows up even in

non-assertoric contexts such as questions, commands and requests, as with Davidson's example of 'Did you notice that . . .?'. Yet such cases are not so rare as Geach evidently supposes. Besides those already mentioned, numerous others readily spring to mind, e.g., 'recognize that', 'remember that', 'forget that', 'rightly believes', 'wrongly thinks', 'mistakes', etc., in addition to such words as 'still', 'already' and 'yet'. *Wh-* questions, exclamations, pejorative words, and yes-no questions like 'Are you always so rude?', are all 'quasi-assertive': all express implicit presumptions or beliefs.

The view that all such cases can be analyzed as two (or more) distinct assertoric utterances might be condoned in cases in which something like complete sentences are conjoined. But the principle that a sign for force always relates to the whole sentence in which it occurs, and cannot form part of a subordinate clause, is undermined by sentences containing, e.g., non-identifying relative clauses. With an example like 'Will you ask the boy who is laughing?' (cf. Rundle, 1990: 135), the subordinate expression, 'who is laughing', imparts assertive character to the whole. But as it is an *identifying* relative clause, Dummett might plausibly attribute this character to the entire designative expression, 'the boy who is laughing'. Such a tack is not possible with non-identifying clauses: e.g., 'Tell Archimedes, who is in the bathtub, to listen for the phone'. We may naturally feel uneasy about construing an utterance of 'Jones fancies that *p*' as two distinct utterances, "Jones thinks that *p*" and "Not-*p*", because of the different contribution which 'thinks' makes. Far worse, there is no guarantee that the language will contain any other suitably synonymous expression by which this style of analysis might be effected.

To sum up, then: we have encountered numerous counterexamples to the main Fregean principles concerning force. In light of these, Dummett's contention that the essential soundness of the Fregean doctrines remains unaffected is somewhat difficult to swallow. In particular, we have uncovered several varieties of assertive-like character, tied neither to the linguistic act of assertion, nor even to grammatical statement form. On the other hand, the regular patterns discernible with regard to form and meaning lend support to Dummett's penchant for system. A general distinction between sense and force is not shown to be either incoherent or vacuous, despite occurrences of individual expressions contributing to the latter. Especially where sentences containing exactly the same words are uttered with different intonation, different word order, or with a change in verbal mood, a different category, or ingredient, is usefully distinguished–so long as we do not erroneously construe this as a different *kind* of meaning.

1.8 Conclusion: jettisoning the radical

The intuition that individual words retain a constant meaning in declarative, interrogative and imperative contexts is most conspicuously suited to nouns like 'armchair' and 'mousetrap', and so too with noun phrases generally. It applies equally to pronouns, and to expressions which commonly combine with nominal expressions, e.g., adjectives like 'yellow' and 'expensive', articles, connecting words and prepositions. With the verbal unit, we call on the infinitive to account for sameness of meaning, and look to changes in inflection and mood for differences. The behaviour of adverbs also

squares well with this view. However, this overwhelming intuition is not adequately served by the apparatus of force-indicators and–especially–sentence-radicals, even though these were originally propounded precisely as a way of explaining the constancy of individual expressions.

But neither is it captured by what seems to be a Wittgensteinian alternative, according to which the meanings of entire sentences are associated solely with their uses in different language games. Since these may be innumerable, and especially since in any case there is no necessary, or even standard, connection between different uses of the same expression, it looks as though there simply is no answer to a query about what a particular word means. Perhaps this will be taken to show that this unqualified question makes no sense. Baker & Hacker's censure of all attempts at a systematic account of (implicit) linguistic knowledge is accompanied by the admonishment that a good dictionary and a good grammar book suffice to supply the content of speakers' linguistic knowledge (1984: 274-279). This overlooks the possibility that the contents of a comprehensive grammar will, to an impressive extent, be classified and explained in systematic fashion. Furthermore, the doctrine about language games, coupled with their rejection of the compositionality thesis (cf. 1984: 336-339), make it dubious that they can with consistency advocate even the usefulness of dictionaries. For one thing, no dictionary can provide innumerable contextual definitions. In fact, the typically small number of basic senses assigned to individual words, and the systematic way in which these are presented supports, for a large range of words, the context-*in*dependence of

word-meaning. Where it is felt that a number of different senses, or sub-senses, must be distinguished, explanations ordinarily take the form of variations on the larger theme. In any case, the different uses which such definitions are meant to capture are not such as to violate a general character; rather, they exploit it. Wittgenstein's idea of 'family resemblance' likewise looks to offer little in the way of assistance here. Contra Baker & Hacker, dictionaries offer nothing like the sort of explanation of a word's meaning which Wittgenstein's family resemblance characterization invokes: e.g., 'These and other like activities are what are called 'games'; these and others like them are not', etc. (cf. 1958b: §69, §71, §75). Alike–in what respect? If this cannot be articulated in a way which makes it possible for someone to correctly apply the label in an arbitrary instance, then, not only are we left wondering what possible *usefulness* such a 'definition' has, but if it cannot be articulated then it cannot appear in a dictionary. Thus, it is baffling why Baker & Hacker should even suggest that we can consult a dictionary to learn what a word means.

One of the chief problems with Dummett's canonical force-indicators is their misleading simplicity: by all accounts, which particular sign for force is assignable to a particular utterance is determined by no *single* element of that utterance, but is a matter of such elements as verbal mood, word-order and intonation taken together. However, to stop here, to say merely (albeit correctly) that the combination of these elements determines the force with which a sentence is uttered, does not yet reveal the *distinct* significance attaching to *each* individual element. As we have seen, their different combinatorial possibilities make for different semantic variations. The identical words, with

identical mood and word-order, may be uttered with either rising or falling intonation to produce the semantic difference associated with, e.g., "They've arrived" and "They've arrived?". Here, a difference in force is obvious, but no account of the significance which the declarative word-order imparts to the latter is even on offer. Or, while everything else is kept constant, word-order may be varied: e.g., "They've arrived?" and "Have they arrived?". Although we have here two utterances with identical force *and* identical sense, there is nevertheless a semantic–and not merely stylistic–difference. Thus, even were each arbitrary sentence decomposable into a canonical form employing only force-indicators and sentence-radicals, the account would not be sufficiently explanatory.

The bulk of the discussion has focused on weaknesses in Dummett's model, and has for the most part been 'destructive' in design. Yet, in the final analysis, our many detailed examples support, rather than contradict, the principle of a *standard* association between form and meaning. Not only that, but, certain similarities among the kinds of examples which thwart this model begin to suggest a way to redress its shortcomings. In particular, the significance of word-order, mood and intonation has begun to emerge, a fuller account of which will be sketched in the final chapter. The inadequacies associated especially with the sentence-radical suggest that, minimally, the way our categories are to be drawn requires adjustment. Many of our examples, e.g., those involving sentence adverbs, epistemic modals, conjunctions, and negation, show that the explanation of word-meaning is too constricted by the Fregean notion of sense, defined as it is in terms of truth-conditions. We have

touched on some of the different ways, too, in which utterances, or parts of utterances, can be informative without this being restricted to the assertion of complete Fregean thoughts. This will be taken up again in the next chapter, where further ways in which utterances can be informative without being susceptible to true-false judgments come to light. But first, we confront head-on a matter that has been lurking in the background of many of the previous examples, namely, Frege's and Dummett's attempts to distinguish sense from tone.

Part Two

Varieties of Tone

In the preceding chapter I argued that, apart from the question of its explanatory aptness, the sentence-radical approach is simply incapable of representing a number of expressions of ordinary language. This gave rise to the suggestion, *not* that the notions of sense and force were therefore either useless or indistinguishable, but that, rather, the explication of sentence-meaning and word-meaning not be confined to concepts of truth or truth-conditions. Not be confined, that is, to that portion of what an utterance conveys which can be represented as falling squarely within the scope of a sign for utterance-force. In several cases, sentence-radical shortcomings inevitably invited appeal to that aspect of meaning which Dummett has labeled 'tone', and which Frege variously called 'Farbung' (colour), 'Beleuchtung' (illumination or lighting) and 'Duft' (fragrance or scent). In each case I deflected this manoeuvre, but made no attempt either to generalize or to categorize. Yet, despite its having been heretofore consigned to a dim, outlying region of meaning theory, where it has languished in virtual neglect, it now appears that for accurate, comprehensive accounts of word- and sentence-meaning, nothing less than a critical and thorough examination of this humble feature, or group of features, of natural language is required. Hence, it is to the category of tone that we must now direct our attention.

I previously criticized Frege for lumping together in this category many intuitively different sorts of things without providing any rationale for this, other

than the unsatisfying claim that tone is whatever is left over once the sense and force contributions have been subtracted. Frege was evidently not much interested in those aspects of natural language which might justifiably be described as tonal, regarding them as among the defects of which a logically perfect language was meant to be free. To a great extent, subsequent philosophers of language have shared Frege's overriding interest in the notion of *sense*. To a lesser extent–one which closely mirrors Frege's own degree of interest in this topic–have they applied themselves to the notion of force. Considering the claims made on behalf of Fregean and Tarskian formal devices, it is unsurprising, perhaps, that discussions of tonality are almost non-existent. Recent contributions by Dummett and Rundle apparently constitute the sole exceptions (cf. esp. Dummett, 1981a and 1991, and Rundle, 1983 and 1990).

But consider the following pairs of expressions:

(1) Scott wrote *Waverley* : *Waverley* was written by Scott
(2) Burt loaned me £10 : I borrowed £10 from Burt
(3) We forgot to warn you : Sadly, we forgot to warn you
(4) Liz sucks her thumb : Liz still sucks her thumb
(5) although : however
(6) torch : flashlight
(7) cheekbone : zygoma
(8) dog : doggie
(9) before : ere
(10) dead : deceased
(11) perspiration : sweat
(12) defecate : shit
(13) Chinese : Chink

The question is: can any one semantic characterization capture the different differences between the individual members of each pair? For good measure, throw in a couple of examples like:

(14) Busy bees hummed and buzzed in the summer breeze
(15) The contraption clanked, boinged, slurped, burped and wheezed

Have these two anything in common with each other or with the examples above? Verily, 'twould seem, be these species an congruency, 'tis not but faint shadowy e'en to th' eagle-eyed.

Surely, it supplies little satisfaction to be informed that the difference between members of each pair consists simply in their not figuring in either the sense or the force of utterances. Clearly, Frege's characterization in terms of 'poetic flavour' is inapt for many of these pairs. This is not to say that the notion of tone promises to be anything like as fruitful or as challenging an area for investigation as the notion of sense, or even of force; yet, without a more plausible account of this feature, systematic or no, we have no way of being certain whether Dummett and Frege have drawn their categories in the most helpful way.

In fact, I contend that both Frege and Dummett consign to the category of tone linguistic elements which ought to be counted among the constituents of sentence-sense. Of course, the notion of sense is by definition concerned only with what contributes to truth-conditions–with what makes a difference in this respect–but if the notion is to play a role in the theory of meaning it must be extended to incorporate more than that which falls within the scope of force-indication. Either this, or it should be replaced by a term having the broader

role .

I begin by reviewing Frege's discussion of tonality (§1) and then consider Dummett's and Rundle's attempted improvements (§§2). In §3 I consider the behaviour of so-called 'expressive' and 'evocative' language, and §4 examines the nature of hyponyms and adverbs like 'still', and 'already'. The most important issue, naturally, revolves around the question as to the manner, and the extent to which, the seemingly disparate examples such as those given by Frege, Dummett and Rundle may be characterized within a systematic account of linguistic meaning. Closer inspection of tonality repays the effort, revealing that an important adjustment is required in the explanation of the relation of tonality to meaning. This paves the way for a more comprehensive and more satisfactory form of explanation for our ordinary words and sentences than that provided by the tripartite scheme demarcated along the lines advocated by Frege and Dummett.

2.1 Frege's light and colour: science v. poetry

Sense, force and tone. As Dummett puts it, these are the three 'ingredients' which Frege recognizes as belonging to our general notion of linguistic meaning. That Frege himself does not put it quite this way–he evidently never employs a word for our intuitive notion of meaning, reserving the German word *Bedeutung* for a more specialized use associated with the object referred to, or meant–warrants no quibble. From his earliest writings Frege explicitly acknowledges there is more to natural language, to its sentences in particular, than the expression of thoughts and the force with

which they are uttered. In *Begriffsschrift* he says that one may perceive a slight difference in sense between 'At Platea the Greeks defeated the Persians' and 'At Platea the Persians were defeated by the Greeks', a difference he attributes to the relative importance of subject or object to the interests of the speaker or hearer (1879: §3; although Frege here uses the word *Sinn*, he has not yet given it the specialized meaning by which it is later distinguished from *Bedeutung*).

In 'On Sense and Reference', Frege draws an analogy between these three elements and the telescopic observation of the moon (1892b: 60-61). The moon, being the object of the observation, he compares to the reference. The image produced by the telescopic lens–being objective and independent of any particular observer–he compares to the sense. And an observer's personal–and supposedly subjective–retinal image is analogous to an idea (*Vorstellung* or mental image) or inner experience. Thus, he says,

> We can now recognize three levels of difference between words, expressions, or whole sentences. The difference may concern at most the ideas, or the sense but not the reference, or, finally, the reference as well. (1892b: 60-61)

Aside from force, any aspect of a word's use which does not contribute to the determination of reference comprises its colour, lighting or fragrance. I will follow Dummett in calling this 'tone'. In order to sort out what might belong to this 'rag-bag' category, as Dummett calls it, we need first to uncover as many varieties as possible. Beginning with Frege, I proceed to Dummett's and Rundle's supplementations, advancing considerations which enhance the prospects of an improved positive characterization.

What are Frege's examples of tonality? *Begriffsschrift*, as already noted,

contains the example of passive versus active sentence construction. Here, too, we first encounter Frege's distinction between 'and' and 'but', as well as his example of sentence pairs involving an interchange of dative and nominative: sentences where, e.g., 'receive' replaces 'give', or 'lighter' replaces 'heavier' (1879: §7 and §9, respectively). 'On Sense and Reference', in which Frege explicitly distinguishes his "three levels of difference" between expressions, contains no other examples of tone. 'Logic', published five years later, contains a discussion of several examples in which "a sentence does more than express a thought and assert its truth" (1897: 139). Here Frege locates such seemingly disparate elements as onomatopoeia (including such features as sounds of words, tone of voice, intonation and rhythm), differences among the family 'walk', 'stroll' and 'saunter', and between pejorative 'cur' and its neutral relative 'dog'. Here too we find the words 'ah' and 'unfortunately'–the former used as an interjection, the latter as a sentence adverb–and again the active-passive and dative-nominative transformations. Frege's letter to Husserl of 30 October-1 November 1906 also contains a reference to the colouring and illumination of a thought as being that which remains after sense is subtracted, though no further examples are given (1906b: 101-105; unfortunately, Husserl's reply of 10 November is lost, part of which reportedly dealt with 'equivalent sentences and "colouring"'). Finally, in 'The Thought', the last surviving writing in which he discusses this topic, Frege cites the interjections 'alas' and 'thank God', the differences between 'horse', 'steed', 'cart-horse' and 'mare', the adverbs 'still' and 'already', and dative-nominative exchange (1918: 22-23). Frege also mentions the sense-tone distinction in 'A brief Survey of my logical Doctrines'

(1906a), but gives no further examples. As far as I can determine, this constitutes a complete list of Frege's examples of tonality.

I will consider additions to this list, but first I want to examine the characterizations, over and above the negative criteria, which Frege offers for tonality. In 'Logic', immediately following his distinction between the 'three levels of difference', he characterizes tonality as being both mental and subjective:

> With respect to the first level, it is to be noted that, on account of the uncertain connexion of ideas with words, a difference may hold for one person, which another does not find. The difference between a translation and the original text should properly not overstep the first level. To the possible differences here belong also the colouring [*Farbung*] and shading [*Beleuchtung*] which poetic eloquence seeks to give to the sense. Such colouring and shading are not objective and must be evoked by each hearer or reader according to the hints of the poet or speaker.
>
> (1897: 30-31)

As Dummett is quick to point out, Frege's portrayal of tonality as a matter of subjective associations with mental images is unsatisfactory (1981a: 85-88, 1991: 122). Talk of mental images is out of place with examples of tone which Frege himself gives, e.g., the pair 'and' and 'but', active versus passive sentence construction, and pairs like 'dog' and 'cur'.

Moreover, *if* tonality is an ingredient of meaning, then if meaning is objective, tonality must also be. If any aspect of an expression's meaning is subjective, the meaning of whole sentences in which it occurs must therefore also be subjective, at least in part. That meaning is in part subjective accords with what Frege says in some places; yet it is inconsistent with his broad view of the objectivity of interpreted languages, and should be regarded as a defect. If an individual speaker somehow comes to associate with the application of a

particular expression a set of conditions different from that which other speakers of the language standardly associate with it, then if this idiosyncratic association is sufficiently constant, it can be recognized by other speakers. They can make allowance for the deviation; i.e., they can understand his *idiolect.* On the other hand, if the supposedly subjective associations are not constant–if say, the same word calls up different mental images or idiosyncratic associations on each occasion–then there is no reason even to suppose that this individual knows what he means, for there are no grounds for speaking of a meaning at all (cf. Dummett, 1981a: 85; Frege says in 'Logic' (1897), "Even with the same man the word 'horse' does not always conjure up the same idea").

Frege seems to think of tone as something specially to do with poetry or poetic language. In many places he characterizes tone as a poetic fragrance that attaches to certain expressions. As we saw in the passage from 'On Sense and Reference', Frege remarks that "to the possible differences [in mental images] belong also the colouring and shading which poetic eloquence seeks to give to the sense." In 'Logic' he says,

> In many cases a sentence is meant to have an effect on the ideas and feelings of the hearer as well; and the more closely it approximates to the language of poetry, the greater the effect is meant to be.
>
> (1897: 139)

The natural interpretation yields a picture of language as stretched between two basic models of expressions. On one side is a purely logical model science aims to emulate: language which is to a maximal degree free of ambiguities, vagueness, empty terms and the like, wherein nothing is left to 'hints' and 'guesswork'. On the other side is poetic language, embodying all the ills just

mentioned, whose key function seems to consist primarily in an ability to call forth mental images and feelings in speakers and hearers. As Frege says in 'The Thought',

> An indicative sentence often contains, as well as a thought and the assertion, a third component over which the assertion does not extend. This is often said to act on the feelings, the mood of the hearer or to arouse his imagination. . . . Such constituents of sentences are more noticeably prominent in poetry, but are seldom absent from prose. They occur more rarely in mathematical, physical, or chemical than in historical expositions. What are called the humanities are more closely connected with poetry and are therefore less scientific than the exact sciences which are drier the more exact they are, for exact science is directed toward truth and only the truth. Therefore all constituents of sentences to which the assertive force does not reach do not belong to scientific exposition but they are sometimes hard to avoid, even for one who sees the danger connected with them. Where the main thing is to approach what cannot be grasped in thought by means of guesswork these components have their justification.
>
> (1918: 22-23)

Frege might be excused for such a crude picture, since his overriding interest was in setting up a language suitable for the purposes of formal logic; but as an account of natural language and of the tonal aspect of certain expressions, this will obviously not do. Frege extends this characterization not only to expressive interjections like 'alas' and 'thank God', and (perhaps more plausibly) to the difference between 'horse' and 'steed', but he curiously brings it to bear on the difference between active and passive voice: "As a rule stylistic and aesthetic reasons will give the preference to one of them" (1897: 141).

This leaves us with Frege's talk of 'hints' (*Anspielung*) and 'hinting' (*andeuten*). Possibly, this is meant to provide a more general characterization than the poetic, insofar as Frege often seems to couch the latter in terms of the former: the poet furnishes only hints, which provide the impetus for his hearers themselves to form their own images. That Frege also explains the difference

between 'and' and 'but' in terms of hinting might support this reading. For Frege, 'but' hints that what follows is different from what one would expect. But both Dummett and Rundle provide examples like 'It's only an imitation, but it's cheaper than the real thing', where what follows 'but' is just what would be expected given its preceding clause. Dummett nevertheless retains the idea of hinting, claiming that 'but' hints of some contrast, relevant to the context, between the two clauses, though not necessarily a contrast between what the second clause expresses and what one would expect (cf. 1981a: 86, and Rundle, 1979: 393-394).

In any case, Frege's broad contention that whatever does not fall under the assertion sign is thus a matter of tone, naturally allows this characterization. Whatever is not asserted can only be hinted at, suggested, indicated, or 'implied'. Frege describes the use of 'still' and 'already' in just this way:

> With the sentence 'Alfred has still not come' one really says 'Alfred has not come' and, at the same time, hints that his arrival is expected, but it is only hinted. It cannot be said that, since Alfred's arrival is not expected, the sense of the sentence is therefore false.
>
> (1897: 23)

In section 5 I show that, contra Frege and Dummett, such words are not tonal. As for the idea of 'hinting', this is unsatisfactory as a general characterization of the meaning contribution of any lexical item. Naturally, 'hint' cannot simply be substituted for 'not asserted', or 'whatever the force does not extend over', which would be merely an empty exchange. For Frege, what is hinted is what can only be *guessed* at. Yet, when a speaker uses 'but', he does not merely 'hint' that he has some contrast in mind. Assuming its correct use, a competent hearer *knows* this to be the case. The word gives a clear and

unambiguous signal to this effect, for that is its purpose. It conveys something to the hearer, albeit implicitly. The same holds with 'still' and 'already'. It is no guessing game between speaker and hearer over whether the speaker possesses a particular expectation.

We observed the same behaviour in sentence adverbs: a sincere utterance of 'Hopefully, Daffy Duck will play the piano' does not merely hint, in Frege's sense, that the speaker hopes for Daffy's performing; it conveys this information quite clearly.[1] Similarly, if a speaker calls some dog a cur, or some black man a nigger, or exclaims, "Thank God!", we know very well what his attitude is in each particular case–at least he represents himself as having the particular attitude. This much cannot be doubted. Neither is it *inferential*, if this is taken to entail the possibility of a gap in our reasoning where we may go wrong. We may doubt the sincerity with which he speaks, but the meaning of his words is clear. Talk of hinting and guessing gives us no grip on tonality and meaning. So far, we are left with a number of examples which have no more in common than their unfitness for Dummett's Fregean scheme of force-indicators and sentence-radicals. This leaves much to be desired; but, fortunately, there is room for improvement.

Before moving on to Dummett's account, a couple of Frege's examples can be dealt with in fairly short order. If someone asks after the difference in meaning between 'Scott wrote *Waverley*' and '*Waverley* was written by Scott',

[1]There may be room for uncertainty with such sentence adverbs; e.g., often there is a certain amount of indeterminacy with respect to scope: by whom is it to be hoped that such-and-such? –By everyone?, by most people?, by the speaker? Compare with other sentence adverbs such as 'unfortunately' or 'surprisingly'. Compare also with such evaluative terms as 'boring' and 'amusing', and non-evaluative terms like 'puzzling'.

we might be hard pressed for an answer. Possibly they are synonymous, as Katz maintains (1968: 473). Frege concedes they are not identical in every respect: in different contexts one is preferable to the other. But perhaps this reveals a dissociation of use and meaning. That a speaker employs the active form to give greater weight, or attention, to the subject relates rather to his point or purpose. The active version is more appropriate when what is at issue is just who Scott is, or what things Scott did; similarly when 'things written by Scott' is the concern, the passive version is usually preferred. This is *not* an empty stylistic preference. Consider it like this: use of declarative form is usually motivated by a belief in the truth of what is expressed; but this form also standardly conveys that the speaker has this belief. That it does belongs to an explanation of its meaning. The motive for asserting something in one particular form rather than another, however, is not associated in this way with the meaning either of the form or the content. The distinction between active and passive construction appears to belong, then, to the complex matter of point.

Of course, not every active construction transforms into an acceptable passive. Many prepositional verbs resist passivisation e.g., 'The army marched beside the barracks', but * 'The barracks were marched beside by the army' (cf. Bolinger, 1977: 9-10). But this looks to have more to do with particular verbs and their complementation than to either active or passive form. But since in any case this difference is not tonal, any difference between the two forms which *can* be assigned to linguistic meaning, strictly understood, further undermines the Fregean tripartite scheme.

Were the difference between active and passive forms genuinely a matter of tone–thought of as an ingredient of meaning–the question would naturally arise as to whether both, or only one of the versions, possessed tone. If only one, then which? There seems to be no non-arbitrary reason to ascribe tone to one rather than the other. But, if both were to be regarded as possessing a distinctive tone, every sentence capable of active-passive transformation would possess some tone–a highly counterintuitive consequence. Nothing distinctively tonal attaches to 'China occupies Tibet'. On Frege's characterization, even identity statements like 'John Major is Prime Minister' might be regarded as distinctively tonal; and compare mathematical statements like '2 + 2 > 3' and '3 < 2 + 2'. Surely, even Frege would balk at this consequence.

Much the same can be said of the example of nominative-dative transformations. According to Frege, all sentences in which the dative and nominative are interchanged while the predicate is replaced by its opposite differ only in tone. Thus, 'Merton is older than Univ' and 'Univ is younger than Merton' express the same thought and differ in tone. But again, it is impossible to see in what the putative tonality consists: to which sentence does it belong? If tone here consists in the relative importance accorded a subject, this holds for all sentences with grammatical subjects. That is to say, their respective tonality is identical. But if tonality attaches to particular subjects, we should have to say that, e.g., the propositions '10 < 100' and '100 < 1000' differ not only in sense, but in tone as well; i.e., the numerals '10' and '100' impart some distinctive tone to sentences in which they occur (as subjects). But this is absurd.

So, with such cases we have these possibilities: either these sentence pairs do not differ in tone, and so do not differ in meaning; or they do differ in tone, but tone here is not an ingredient of meaning. On the other hand, such pairs might differ in meaning, in which case the difference is to be reckoned a difference in *sense*, not tone. With the example of nominative-dative transformations, the latter has more claim to our allegiance.

At first glance it may appear that the idea of truth-conditions, as this applies to whole sentences, gives us no purchase on the difference between 'Spock sold a laser gun to me' and 'I bought a laser gun from Spock'. Where such pairs exist, it is difficult to imagine explaining one without invoking the other, or one of a similarly polar pair; although it is perfectly conceivable that a language should contain just one of the concepts. Here, Frege's additional criteria for sameness of sense–that no difference in informativeness attends truth-functionally equivalent expressions–might bite: it can hardly be denied that anyone who recognizes the truth of the sentence 'Big Ben is taller than St. Paul's' will also recognize the truth of 'St. Paul's is shorter than Big Ben' (where both comparatives are understood) and vice versa; the resulting biconditional has the appearance of an apodeictic truth. Nevertheless, it is unclear whether Frege's construal of sense as the 'mode of presentation' of semantic value is utterly impotent here: can there be absolutely no difference in anything like an ostensive teaching, for example, of the verbs 'buy' and 'sell'? Although buying and selling are intimately related–to the exchanging of goods for money–they are clearly quite different–opposites, as we say. Consequently, the respective terms are associated with different concepts. Accordingly, their respective

sentential meaning-contributions differ. Spock's selling a laser gun to me, and my buying a laser gun from Spock, may be thought to come to the same thing, reflected in a true biconditional statement. But Spock's selling, and my buying something, are entirely distinct. It is really the complementations, 'sold *to me*', and 'bought *from Spock*', which, with the specific subjects, serve to bring the two statements together. And so with 'borrow'-'lend', 'give'-'receive', 'before'-'after', 'employer'-'employee', 'better'-'worse', and a multitude of others.

What we can say then is that sentences in which nominative and dative are exchanged while one member of a contrastive pair is substituted for the other are intimately related such that if one sentence is recognized as true (or false) then the other is thereby recognized as having the same truth-value. But this falls short of ascribing to them identity of sense.

Frege also includes in this category some types of examples which appear wholly unrelated to those just considered (cf. examples (14) and (15) in the previous section). With a sentence fragment like 'slithers and hisses in the grass', where the element of onomatopoeia is heard, we must ask whether there is anything to its meaning over and above simply whatever information it conveys. Again I answer this in the negative. Doubtless, prominent repetition of the 's' sound imparts a certain colour to the utterance, and may be exploited for special effect or purpose; nevertheless, this is a matter more of happy accident than of a standard connection to anything which either the words or the way they are put together represent. Failure on the part of the audience to appreciate this effect does not reflect a defect in their comprehension. They may not know *why* the speaker has uttered all those 's' sounds, it may not put

them in mind of a snake, supposing this to be the speaker's intention; but their failure to apprehend his intention does not betray a failure to understand his words.

If we still want to call this an example of tone, fine; that only reinforces the claim that not every use involves meaning. Similarly with alliteration: with 'Penelope provoked the potbellied porter', a 'use to achieve an (auditory) effect' is in no way a standard character of the individual words, and so does not feature in any explanation of their correct use in making things out to be a particular way. The same applies to such things as the possibility for rhyme and rhythm. Just as the plosive 'p' is no semantic feature of 'Penelope', 'provoked', 'potbellied' and 'porter', so the phonetic similarity of 'grudge', 'sludge' and 'fudge' may suit an intention to create a pattern of rhyme, while not featuring in their meanings.

What of assonance? Words like 'clang', 'pop', 'swoosh', 'gurgle', 'squeak' and 'chirp' occupy a special place in the vocabulary of many languages; they stand in for, or derive their meaning from the sounds which they resemble (when spoken). Does this mean, then, that they impart something other than a Fregean sense to the larger expressions in which they occur? 'The mouse squeaked', 'The robin chirped', 'The brook gurgled' and 'The cymbals clanged' all straightforwardly assert that the various subjects made the respective sounds signified. There seems to be nothing more to it than that. Naturally, such uses can be extended, as in 'The Vice President squelched the rumour': the word 'squelch' here retains an association with a squishing sound caused by forceful compression, and is appropriate insofar as

this action may be applied, or compared, to the VP's action. Does it therefore impart some colour to the utterance? Possibly; but if so, this relates to metaphor. On the other hand, if an extended use itself becomes standard issue, that is, if we can assign to 'squelch' a distinct sense, as e.g., 'to forcibly put down or end (a rumour or discussion)', then any 'colourful' association becomes an historical artifact, an adventitious residue which no longer plays any part in an explanation of current meaning.

Needless to say, there is much more to be filled out in the examination of tonality. Yet, it is helpful to discard certain putative examples at the beginning, for the basis on which we may justifiably do so may prove useful in coming to grips with more legitimate claims which follow.

2.2 Dictionary usage labels: dialect, subject & style

In 'Sense and Tone' Dummett remarks,

> It is . . . unclear whether tone is a single feature of the meaning of a sentence or expression in addition to its sense, or whether, say, a different feature distinguishes 'but' from 'and' from that which distinguishes 'cur' from 'dog'. (1981a: 3)

He takes this up again in the chapter 'Sense and Reference', where he restates the Fregean claim that differences in meaning not relevant to the determination of sentential truth-conditions are to be "relegated" to the category of tone. The pairs 'dead'-'deceased' and 'and'-'but' are cited in this connection, pairs whose individual members can be interchanged, according to Dummett, without affecting either the meaningfulness or the truth-value of any sentence in which they occur. He concedes,

> 'Tone' has here been defined in a ragbag way, which will have to be modified subsequently . . .; moreover, there is no reason to suppose that all those variations in meaning between expressions having the same sense . . . , which Frege counts as differences in tone, are uniform in kind. Frege apparently did suppose this.
>
> (ibid.: 85)

Following criticisms of Frege's mentalistic and subjectivist portrayal of tonality, Dummett offers a way of distinguishing sense from tone in terms of what he calls an 'impression of meaning', which looks to be intended as a general characterization (1981a: 87-88). Dummett calls "the meaning which a speaker is disposed to attach to a word, straight off, without reflection", the 'impression' of its meaning, and proposes two differences between sense and tone in respect of such an impression. The first is that an *incorrect* impression of sense is obtained normally only by having mistakenly supposed that a word was intended to convey that sense which corresponds to the impression,[2] whereas an incorrect impression of tone may often derive from experiences having nothing to do with any mistake about the tone the word is conventionally intended to carry–i.e., from an idiosyncratic association which endows it with a "special flavour" that may persist despite the fact that the speaker is aware that it has nothing to do with the standardly accepted meaning of the word.

This distinction is not altogether clear. The reference to speakers' intentions looks irrelevant, since both sides could be formulated without it. And although it might seem captious to point out, the qualifiers 'normally' and 'may often be' employed in the characterizations of sense and tone, respectively, render the distinction fuzzy. Moreover, if someone has an *incorrect* impression

[2]Dummett gives as an example here the word 'incumbency', which he says makes on him the impression of applying to the act of lying down in bed since, as a child, and for some time afterwards, he thought that it had that meaning.

of tone, it would seem that, necessarily, this is due to some *mistake* about an expression's standard tone. Ultimately, the notion of an 'impression of *meaning*' itself presupposes the two categories, if a particular impression of meaning is attributable to either an *impression of sense* or an *impression of tone*. The former notion is explained in terms of the latter two, which in turn rely on the distinction between sense and tone as ingredients of *meaning*; thus 'the impression of meaning' cannot be used to characterize either.

The second difference between sense and tone which Dummett posits in this connection concerns the difference between a knowledge of meaning and an impression of meaning, especially as this relates to tone. Dummett here cites "the evocative use of language" which is fulfilled just in case an appropriate mood or attitude is aroused in a hearer. In such cases, what is crucial is precisely that which Dummett calls a hearer's *impression* of tone. I am uncertain, but it appears that Dummett assimilates the idea of having a mood or attitude which is evoked to that of a particular *association* which an expression has for a hearer, one which imparts a special flavour to the expression. It seems to me that associations, but not evoked feelings or attitudes, may be regarded as *impressions of* tone. Dummett's use of 'impression' seems to vacillate from one use to another.

In any event, Dummett observes that expressive and evocative expressions do not exhaust the category of tone, pairs like 'and'-'but' not relating to the attitudes of either speakers or hearers. Although the distinction drawn in terms of an 'impression of meaning' seems to offer little towards the desired characterization of tonality, the allusion to expressive and evocative

language, being general types, may give us something more to go on. In §3 I make a closer inspection of these two features, but I now proceed to Dummett's latest writings on tonality.

In *The Logical Basis of Metaphysics* Dummett briefly discusses the issue of tonality (1991: 121-122). He asserts right off that "it is not really a single type of ingredient but comprises disparate components associated only by belonging neither to force nor to sense". A slight slip occurs when he says that it is a lack of precise content that keeps 'but' from contributing to the sense of sentences (ibid.: 121): 'but', on both Frege's and Dummett's views, contributes just as much as 'and' does to sentence-*sense*. What he means to say, of course, is that 'but''s lack of precision (with respect to the contrast in connection with which it is appropriately applied) fails to give it a sense *distinct* from that possessed by 'and'. I think this is mistaken: the precise character of conjunctions like 'and', 'but', and 'although' is in no way a peripheral matter; but I will not argue the point here (cf. Rundle, 1983, for a detailed discussion of conjunctions). I want to examine Dummett's recent attempt to taxonomize the remaining varieties of tone.

The following passage contains a number of distinct ideas representing his latest view, on which the remainder of this section will focus. Since Dummett describes the pair 'and'-'but' as a 'special case' of tonality, for the moment I leave it to one side. He claims:

> More characteristic are the differences between 'dead' and 'deceased', 'woman' and 'lady', '*vous*' and '*tu*' in French, 'rabbit' and 'bunny', 'womb' and 'uterus', 'enemy' and 'foe', 'meal' and 'repast', 'politician' and 'statesman'. The choice between such twins serves to convey, and sometimes also to evoke, an attitude to the subject or, more particularly, to the hearers. It serves to define the proposed *style* of discourse,which, in turn, determines the kind

> of thing that may appropriately be said. We may speak to one another solemnly or light-heartedly, dispassionately or intimately, frankly or with reserve, formally or colloquially, poetically or prosaically; and all these modes represent particular forms of transaction between us. These complex social aspects of linguistic interchange are signalled by our choice of words; and, in so far as it is capable of serving to give such a signal, that capacity is part of the meaning of a word. When a dictionary notes, after its definition of a word, 'archaic', 'vulgar', or the like, it is, quite properly, indicating its tone.
>
> (1991: 122)

The first thing to note is Dummett's characterization of *all* the examples above as being either expressive or evocative. This is awkward at best for most of the pairs he cites. While it might apply to polite forms, which 'lady', '*vous*' or 'perspiration' conceivably represent, what kind of attitude is either expressed or evoked by the choice of 'deceased' or 'uterus', say? Are these accurately depicted as expressing either a legalistic or a scientific (or perhaps more generally, a technical) attitude toward the subject? Just as little, I should say, as portraying them as evoking like attitudes in hearers. To say they signal an attitude *toward* the hearer seems equally bizarre. More plausibly for such cases, a particular choice *embraces* a particular *style* of discourse, within which, as Dummett says, certain expressions are appropriate or otherwise.

The second thing to notice, however, is that Dummett assimilates 'style of discourse' to the expression and evocation of attitudes. When members of a scientific community, for instance, address one another using terms which have their home in such discourse, it is hard to see how these words can be either expressive or evocative in the way Dummett portrays these. They do not serve to convey any attitude on the part of the speaker toward the subject, let alone toward the hearer. In fact, in their natural settings, no tonal character is discernible: only when employed *outside* this setting are they felt to impart any

distinctive tone.

Thirdly, Dummett suggests dictionary usage labels invariably correspond to a definiendum's tone; and finally, such specifications are purportedly always a matter of *meaning*. These two claims require closer examination in light of the sense-tone distinction, for neither is perfectly faithful to the facts.

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary observes that words are classifiable according to their sphere of currency or usage (Introduction, §2, 'The Vocabulary': ix-x). Labels used for this purpose include 'obsolete', 'literary', 'colloquial', 'slang', 'dialectal', 'local', 'archaic' and 'vulgar' on the one hand, and 'Art', 'Natural History', 'Mathematics', and so on, on the other. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* follows this bifurcation: the former specifications are grouped under 'register', the latter under 'subject'. These variations closely mirror those of the *Shorter Oxford*, but among the varieties of register can also be found: 'formal', 'jocular' and 'derogatory'. *The American Heritage Dictionary* is in close agreement with both; although it provides three general types of labels–field, stylistic and geographic–corresponding to the subject, register and dialectal categories above.

Perhaps the best place to begin is with the dialectal subclass. British speakers say 'torch', Americans say 'flashlight' for the same item. In colloquial speech Australians say 'cobber', the British 'mate'. Differences pertain solely to variations among regional dialects. But is there any difference in *meaning*? Rundle suggests the pertinent differences here lie on the side of *users*, and can thus serve to identify a speaker as, in all likelihood, Australian, say; but the condition 'user is Australian' has no place in a word's meaning, since where the

word is standard it cannot differentiate any of its users (cf. 1990: 21-22).

What is crucial, here and elsewhere, is the idea of a *standard* use. Expressions standardly employed by speakers of a particular region, but not by speakers of the mother tongue everywhere, belong to the regional sub-language or *dialect*. Where a word is the one standardly employed, it possesses no special tone. In American English, the 'hood' is that part of a car which in Britain is called the 'bonnet'. But for Americans 'hood' possesses no distinctive tone; competency does not require that Americans even be aware of the existence of a British variant. And vice versa with the British and 'bonnet'.

Again we should ask: which of the two words is to be ascribed a special tone? No non-arbitrary reason to attribute tone to one rather than the other expression is to be had. Yet if the answer is 'both', then this character is something of which American and British speakers might be completely unaware. But surely, when American and British speakers converse with their compatriots, nothing like this suggests linguistic incompetence. It is only when an expression is used outside its natural setting that it is felt to possess a special colouring. Only in *non*standard contexts do such exploitable 'associations' make themselves felt. An American might use the word 'cobber' in order to induce a belief that he is Australian; but surely this is just a matter of natural, as opposed to properly linguistic meaning. Equally, 'cobber' cannot change meaning simply by being used now by an American, now by an Australian. If a word possesses no distinctive tone in its natural setting, how could it be otherwise outside this setting, if the difference pertains solely to a difference in user? The upshot is that dialectal variants do not possess different

meanings. Thus, either tonality is absent, or else regional tone is not a matter of meaning. Either way, regional dialect does not feature in an account of an expression's meaning.

How far does the idea of dialect extend? Obviously, it does not apply to all of Dummett's pairs; the difference between 'dog' and 'cur' is not geographical, nor does it reflect a standard versus a special use. But might we not apply this idea to other usage labels? A natural thought is that the foregoing discussion applies to the subject category. The labels 'Law', 'Mathematics', Nautical', 'Music', and so on indicate that a word is current primarily in a particular field of activity and is not in general use, does not belong to the common stock of the language. The distinction between a common and a special use thus seems apt here.

One important point is that questions of tone do not always involve *pairs* of words. Dummett invariably explains tone in comparative terms involving one neutral expression, as if, e.g., all conjunctions mean "and' *plus* something else'. The inadequacy of this approach is shown by the following example. Although a verbal definition is easy enough to come by, there is no equivalent single word in general use for the verb 'dump' of Computerese, where it means "to reproduce data stored internally in a computer onto an external storage medium". The label 'Computer Science' which accompanies the dictionary definition indicates that 'dump' is a term of art. Among computer hacks, there is no question of this word possessing any distinctive tone. But again, when 'dump' is competently used in this sense by a non-computer expert, it does not thereby acquire a different meaning. Similarly, if I declare "Julio sang *a*

cappella ", I may be taken to possess some special familiarity with musical forms, a knowledge not implied if I state "Julio sang without instrumental accompaniment". On the other hand, by using the expression *a cappella* it may be that I reveal nothing more than a familiarity with musical terminology. In any case, distinct meanings are not in play. Among musicians and musicologists, the word carries no special tone.

Things appear much the same with an example like the nautical 'knot'. This term looks to be merely a specialized variant; not a matter of style, but rather of subject, 'dialectal' in character. And yet, ignoring intentional contexts, we can substitute its equivalent in miles per hour, given by the true identity statement: 1 knot = 1.15 miles per hour. On Frege's and Dummett's view a different form of measurement constitutes a difference in sense, not tonality.

Then, if we rule out both regional and subject associations as belonging to a word's meaning–as distinct from its use–we are left with the category of style. Here, I suggest, is one place where we can legitimately find room for the notion of tone. Among the varieties of dictionary register labels we found the categories 'formal', 'colloquial' and 'slang'. Though this group does not match up with any of Frege's examples, such a sub-categorization of individual expressions suits some of Dummett's pairs.

Consider what difference there may be between the words 'commence' and 'begin'. The natural thing to offer, by way of explanation, is the thought that these are two words for the same action; any difference between them has to do solely with a difference in location along an axis of formality. Simply put, 'commence' is just a more formal variant of 'begin'. But, does this mean that

'commence' and 'begin' are synonyms, that any difference relates solely to special specifications of *use*? Possibly; but again, the divergence of use and meaning comes to the fore.

Here is one thought as to a difference between the category of style on the one hand, and those of subject and dialect on the other. With the latter two we noted that linguistic competence does not require any recognition of the existence of corresponding dialectal or specialist forms. For example, use of 'cobber' by an American English speaker cannot be faulted simply on the grounds that the speaker is not Australian, or especially because the speaker does not recognize its restricted currency. On the other hand, use of 'commence' and 'begin' in inappropriate contexts can be challenged, not to the extent that what the speaker says is thereby rendered false, but to the extent that a particular choice sounds stilted, and invites replacement by a more appropriate variant. Whether or not such differences are to be reckoned a matter of meaning, knowledge of the factors governing the choice of expression does seem to comprise a necessary ingredient in any account of speakers' linguistic competence. This leads, however, to the thought that if our interest is in getting clear about the concept of *meaning* we must be prepared to acknowledge that not every piece of linguistic knowledge, not everything that contributes to linguistic competence, plays a role in a descriptive and explanatory account of this concept.

The foregoing thoughts may best apply to Dummett's examples of the pair 'meal'-'repast' and the trio 'man'-'guy'-'chap' (1978: 93). Some overlap among categories can be tolerated and is to be expected. Another point that

might favour including variations along the formal-slang axis in the meaning-theory is that such differences cut across other categories: examples of slang can be found within different dialects and different subjects, e.g., nautical slang, computer slang, or slang of the American southwest for instance. But this fact by itself is not decisive: circumstances which favour a polite form over a neutral, or especially a vulgar variant, for example, may relate to conversational convention, rather than impart any additional linguistic meaning.

How is it, then, with other of Dummett's examples? The passage quoted above contains the pairs 'dead'-'deceased', 'woman'-'lady', 'vous'-tu', 'rabbit'-'bunny', 'womb'-'uterus', 'enemy'-'foe' and 'politician'-'statesman'. Dummett's inclusion of this last pair is rather surprising, and is perhaps merely over-hasty. This pair is quite out of place here and can be dispensed with quickly, the difference in meaning being gross enough to effect a difference in truth and falsity: to quote Henry Adams, "They were statesmen not politicians; they guided public opinion, but were little guided by it".

Matters are not so simple with Dummett's other pairs. Consider 'dead' and 'deceased'. I suspect that Dummett has in mind the prevalence of the latter term in legal documents and speech, the choice between the two seemingly nothing more than a matter of the degree of formality, or technicality, appropriate to legalese. Legal jargon may also count as *subject* terms of art alongside those of the specialized 'dialects' of music, mathematics, computer science, etc., where 'dialectal' character enjoys no semantic association. This can be the case with those terms of art lying outside the stock of everyday expressions; i.e., expressions so highly specialized as not to appear in

dictionaries of the common language. Yet even such terms may find their way into the corpus of commonly used expressions, and among those that do we should not be surprised to find a second or even a third expression which differs only stylistically.

As I said, it may be that Dummett has in mind something like a stylistic distinction with the pair 'dead'-'deceased'. Such a characterization, however, overlooks important differences far removed from any of the foregoing considerations. Though this pair enjoys some claim to sameness of sense across a wide range, many contexts do not permit intersubstitution. We correctly say of such things as trees, planets, languages and beliefs, and figuratively of engines, cigarettes and fingers, that they are dead, rather than deceased. Why? Though both terms–along with 'defunct', 'departed', 'lifeless' and 'inanimate'–mean 'devoid of life', 'dead' applies strictly to anyone or anything that has been deprived of life, and also to things which have not lived in a literal sense, but which have existed for a time and have been used or accepted, or which have proven effective or influential. 'Deceased', on the other hand, has a more restricted range: it applies only to persons, and especially to those who have died comparatively recently, or who are under current consideration. Such differences, attaching as they do to what the respective terms are correctly applied to, do not belong to the category of tone. More importantly, they are not captured by an association with truth-conditions–a consideration which further supports the contention that Dummett's and Frege's category of sense is drawn too narrowly. True, a different range of things goes with the different conditions. But the Fregean

view that such conditions do not belong to an assertible content is correct, and 'false' is too blunt an instrument for evaluation. Misuse of one or the other expression does not render an utterance false, but simply *wrong*.

Dummett's pair 'woman'-'lady' also presents a more complicated picture than the notion of style can handle. On the one hand, we may view 'lady' in certain contexts merely as a polite synonym for 'woman'. Yet, it is precisely a difference in 'sense' that inclines one to think of 'lady' as a mere stylistic variant of 'woman'. Both are comparable with reference to adult female persons; however, as compared with 'woman–correlative with 'man'–which emphasizes the essential qualities of the adult female person, 'lady'–correlative with gentleman–connotes the additional qualities inherent in gentle breeding, a gracious nature and cultivated background. This makes for a preference when such things as exalted social position or refinement are involved, to the extent that an actual contrast may be invoked: 'She may be a woman, but she's no lady'.

Thus, the supposedly polite character of 'lady' really derives from the politeness of *saying of* a woman that she possesses the *defining* characteristics of a lady. Although it may be considered polite to tell a colleague we enjoyed her presentation, nothing in our individual words contributes a polite tone, understood as part of the utterance's literal meaning.

If 'lady' is thought of as being short for 'woman of refinement' say, it is tempting to think truth-conditionality is sufficiently discriminative between 'woman' and 'lady'. 'Lady', then, denotes a kind of woman, so that if someone asserts of a particular woman that she is a lady, the assertion is false if the

woman in question does not possess the requisite characteristics. On the other hand, uses not explicitly predicative or attributive in character are not susceptible of direct falsification, e.g.,'The ladies at the ball were stunningly attired'–a situation prompted by the possibility of referential failure.

Or, to avoid becoming embroiled in disputes about embedded assertions, consider vocative occurrences: 'Ladies, can I interest you in these cheap trainers?'. A referring role is preserved, but the term simply does not fit. The true-false poles ultimately provide too crude a device to yield much in the way of an understanding of such grammatical categories as vocatives. Nevertheless, the conditions associated with the correct use of the word 'lady' make their presence felt even in such contexts; moreover, they do not vary from contexts in which the term occurs as part of a predicate expression.

With the French *vous* and *tu* matters are again slightly more complicated than Dummett's explanation suggests. Correct use of *vous* may *partly* be explained by saying that it, like *tu*, signifies the person addressed, the difference being simply a matter of the former's formality, or politeness. Yet this ignores the applicability of *vous*–but not *tu*–in addressing not only a single person, but a group of persons, each of whom may be on familiar terms with the speaker. Here the choice has nothing to do with style, is not a matter of politeness or formality.

Admittedly, French speakers *could* employ completely distinct expressions for addressing groups as opposed to individuals, and this thought might prompt us to set aside this particular use of *vous* and focus instead on cases in which both terms are used of individuals. In fact, German does just

this, with *du* and *ihr.* If this move is allowed, do *vous* and *tu* possess different meanings? If so, is this attributable to tonality?

Though there is undoubtedly a strong pull in favour of explaining the difference between *vous* and *tu* as a difference between a formal and a familiar style of address, this characterization ought to be resisted as a general account of the meanings of the respective pronouns. True, both are translated in English as 'you'; however, it would be hasty to conclude from this that they share a core ingredient of meaning–as second person singular, say–and differ only in some peripheral way. As contrasted with this picture, their specific character has more to do with what each is used *of*, a characterization, surely, which is not a matter of a preferred style of discourse. We say that *vous* is reserved for addressing persons either of higher rank or status, and especially those who are relatively unfamiliar. On the other hand, *tu* is the correct term for addressing persons with whom one is on familiar terms. This corresponds to a difference in the objects (or, their relation to the speaker). With these two Dummett is right about use signalling a (social) relationship between speaker and hearer, but wrong to portray the crucial difference as merely stylistic. It is the particular character of the relationship signalled by the choice of words which lends the stylistic character to an utterance of that form of words and not the other way round. With *vous* and *tu* this character is not to be relegated to the periphery; rather it is central to an account of their correct employment.

Another of Dummett's examples is the pair 'rabbit' and 'bunny'. Here there is little question of a difference in what the two terms are used of, although the latter is generally reserved for young members of the species: cf. 'dog' and

'puppy'. A more apt pair perhaps is 'dog'-'doggie'. With these, it is still unclear whether their difference is correctly construed as stylistic. Rundle (1990: 22), for instance, suggests that the difference between 'dog' and 'bow-wow' is a matter of the latter's being at home in the vocabulary of the nursery; and this corresponds more closely to what I broadly termed 'dialectal' character.

Do such terms as 'dog' and 'doggie' differ in meaning? Or is it rather that they belong essentially to different 'dialects'? If an adult uses the word 'doggie' to refer to some adult dog, and the hearer is also an adult, no doubt a childlike feeling or tone is conveyed to the hearer. But again, if we want to ascribe a childlike tone to the utterance owing to the presence of this word, it can only be in such a context. Spoken by an adult to a small child, or by one small child to another, this feature does not make itself felt. That adult use of 'doggie' mimics childlike behaviour, or that it signals an analogous attitude on his part, would again seem to be better treated as an example of natural meaning. As it happens, there is more significance to the '-ie' suffix than this; but I will defer this question to the following section on expressives.

So far, I have been playing on the notion of style as a matter of degrees of formality or informality, and perhaps degrees of politeness. The idea of 'styles of discourse' might also be thought broad enough to include a 'literary style', where this encompasses not only variations along a formal-informal axis, but also such things as archaic, poetic and generally recognized 'literary' expressions. Dictionary entries prefaced by the labels 'poetry' and 'literature' might then be thought of in this way, rather than as belonging solely to a particular subject sub-class. The same might also be said of 'technical'

language, where a characterization given in terms of a technical or formal style may not be completely amiss. And so, possibly, with the choice between Dummett's 'womb' and 'uterus'. As I said above, some overlap in the characterization of individual expressions is to be expected. Look up 'womb' in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* and you find 'uterus'; under 'uterus' you find 'the womb'. No subject or style label accompanies either word. Though it might be tempting to portray 'uterus' as a technical (scientific, medical or clinical) word for the womb, it is pretty clear that 'uterus' cannot be said to have a *primary* application in the specified domain, since its use in everyday speech is so widespread.

Are such items to be included among our varieties of tone? Dummett's pair, 'enemy'-'foe' is no doubt intended to exemplify a difference in poetic tone. The usage labels 'poetry' and 'literature indicate that a particular word or expression is confined largely to poetry or that it is found chiefly in literature. This suggests an explanation of *use* along the lines suggested for the various specialized subject terms, and reinforces the idea that pairs like 'ere'-'before', 'neath'-'beneath' and 'bloom'-'abloom' have a legitimate claim to sameness of meaning, but not sameness of use (cf. Rundle on 'over' and 'o'er', 1990: 11-12).

Dummett's 'enemy' and 'foe' is characterizable in terms of this pattern; though even this pair might be teased apart along lines appropriate to a difference in 'sense' rather than tonality (cf. *Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms*). One troubling feature of the pattern of use exhibited by some of these pairs is that there may be good reason to characterize the choice between the individuals as resting *sometimes* on more substantial conditions,

but at other times merely on stylistic grounds. These are analogous to examples of individual words said to possess distinct senses, reflected in separate entries under a dictionary headword.

So, for example, it might be claimed that 'woman' and 'lady' are used sometimes in contexts which require differentiation according to their different senses as sketched above, and sometimes in contexts in which 'lady' functions solely as a polite variant. Much the same could be said for the pairs *vous-tu* and 'enemy'-'foe' as well. There may be occasions in which 'foe' is used in exactly the same sense as 'enemy', but chiefly in poetry or rhetorical prose. What then are we to say about such expressions? Do they individually possess different meanings in the two contexts, or are they univocal across these contexts? If one but not the other use involves tonality–where tone is characterized as an ingredient of meaning–it follows that the expression possesses two meanings. On the other hand, if expressions such as 'lady' and 'foe' really do admit of distinct *uses*, this need not by itself force on us multiple *meanings*; in general more has to be said. 'Lady', for instance, might plausibly be said to enjoy the two distinct uses mentioned above, where the additional element of politeness in the latter use constitutes an ingredient of meaning. If so, its two uses reflect two distinct meanings. However, anyone of parsimonious mind should welcome an account like that sketched earlier, on which variations in use are unified via an explanation of meaning both fundamentally univocal, and sufficiently broad to show how an expression may acquire a *semblance* of tone.

2.3 Expressive and evocative words: bloody curs

In 'Logic' Frege writes,

> If we compare the sentences 'This dog howled the whole night' and 'This cur howled the whole night', we find that the thought is the same. The first sentence tells us neither more nor less than does the second. But whilst the word 'dog' is neutral as between having pleasant or unpleasant associations, the word 'cur' certainly has unpleasant rather than pleasant associations and puts us rather in mind of a dog with a somewhat unkempt appearance. Even if it is grossly unfair to the dog to think of it in this way, we cannot say that this makes the second sentence false. True, anyone who utters this sentence speaks pejoratively, but this is not part of the thought expressed.
>
> (1897:140)

Frege is clearly right in holding that 'dog' and 'cur' are not synonyms. Likewise 'Chinese' and 'Chink'. I side with Frege and Dummett in viewing these differences as semantic. Yet, it remains to be seen whether their differences are to be attributed to tonality or to sense–where the latter may be explained in terms broader than those of truth and falsity–or indeed, whether the differences belong to utterance-force. Other pairs are more difficult to assess in terms of expressivity, e.g., 'defecate' and 'shit'. Where I part company with both of them has more to do with the strict notion of informativeness imposed by Frege and with Dummett's appeal to speaker intention and his deviation, in the case of evocative expressions, from a pattern of explanation which acknowledges the shared or social aspect of the associations governing their correct use.

In the passage above Frege speaks of 'thinking of the dog in this way'. This might bring to mind his construal of sense as 'the mode of presentation' of an object; but this is not what Frege has in mind here. This *way* of thinking of the dog corresponds to thinking of it *pejoratively*, not to some way of thinking of

an object which determines it as that particular animal. And yet, this is perhaps not so obviously a stylistic matter either, thought of in the ways sketched earlier.

Following Dummett, I will call pejorative or derogatory terms 'expressive', since they serve not only to identify an object in a more-or-less 'neutral' way–e.g., as canine, or as Chinese–but also to convey the speaker's attitude toward the object. Notice that they conform nicely with dictionary usage labels: recall the sub-categories *jocular*, *derogatory* and *offensive.* Notice, too, that these sub-categories belong to the broader class of stylistic, rather than dialectal, terms, even where the latter is expanded to encompass both 'geographical' and 'subject' expressions.

To be sure, there is a difference between the pair 'sweat'-'perspiration', on the one hand, and 'Chinese'-'Chink' on the other, the latter reflecting a difference between pejorative versus non-pejorative ways of speaking. Yet, the latter does not seem so clearly a matter of style. A formal or a polite style, yes; but a pejorative *style*? However, if we adopt the more general 'manner of speaking', there is little to quibble about in recognizing a class of 'expressive' terms as one variety of tone. What is semantically important, above and beyond a certain 'descriptive' element, and what sets these expressions apart from our other tonal varieties, belongs primarily *on the side of the speaker*: such words convey the speaker's attitude toward the object or toward what he is saying. But although we can say, without stretching things too far, that both differences are attributable to a *manner* of speaking, such a characterization does not by itself entail that differences between individual members of such pairs are in every case to be reckoned a difference in *meaning*. With respect to the above pairs,

this is attributable only to the latter. I hope this will become clearer, but for now suffice it to say that one important difference between these pairs is that the latter, but not the former, enjoys a direct association with speakers' attitudes.

According to Dummett, "the expressive function is fulfilled as long as the hearer recognizes the attitude which it was the intention of the speaker to convey; it is irrelevant what feelings they evoke in the hearer" (1981a: 88). This gloss is intended to differentiate expressive from evocative terms; but as a general account of expressives it is at best misleading. Since the use of such words serves to express a speaker's attitude whether or not it is conveyed with conscious intention, speaker intention plays no part in the understanding of his words. Nevertheless, it is important to realize that correct use of expressives is still an epistemological–and objective–matter: the understanding of such language is bound up with hearers' (shared) *recognitional* abilities.

However, the passage just quoted appears to suggest a dependence on recognition of a speaker's attitude for an understanding of his utterance: that is, that we understand the utterance, or more precisely in this instance, its expressivity, *via* a recognition of the speaker's attitude. As Dummett surely realizes, though, it is only insofar as we understand the *words* the speaker utters that we can identify the attitude which he conveys by their employment. An understanding of such words cannot be attributed to hearers on the basis of an *antecedent* recognition of an attitude which it is the function of the words themselves to convey.

Offensive terms, on the other hand, and possibly jocular ones as well, can be said to constitute 'evocative' expressions, being primarily associated

with attitudes standardly evoked *in audiences* by their employment. As before, there may be considerable overlap between the two kinds of expression: an utterance like "You bastard!" may be associated with both sets of conditions. It is evocative in the sense that it can be counted on to provoke a characteristic audience reaction–intended or not–and at the same time it expresses the speaker's attitude toward the hearer. Similarly with 'Chink', 'Spic', 'nigger', and all other racial slurs, which are both derogatory and offensive. Examples of non-racial words which can be regarded as both derogatory and offensive might include 'poofter', 'wanker', 'twat' and 'bitch' (as applied to a woman). With respect to tonality these and their ilk are all of a kind–i.e., they possess the same tone. Clearly, they are all words *for* different things; differences among them impinge on truth and falsity. Naturally, then, any common element of meaning belongs to the category of tone. This is not to say that even within the same tonal subclass there is no room for differences. Certainly, different vulgar expressions possess varying degrees of strength, both with respect to the attitude of the speaker as well as to the feelings standardly evoked in hearers: cf. 'blast' and 'sod'–the latter being regarded as much the more vulgar and offensive of the two.

The notion of a 'manner of speaking' is also apt with the use of genuinely offensive expressions. If someone is regarded as having spoken in an offensive manner, it may be due to the content of the expressions used. That is, it may generally be regarded as offensive to state or imply that such-and-such is the case, where what is affirmed is felt to be excessively unkind, harsh, or distasteful. But sometimes the mere presence of certain words is objectionable.

So-called 'taboo' words like 'damn', 'shit', 'bollocks', or the stronger counterparts of 'have sexual intercourse' and 'vaginal area', can occur in unasserted contexts, and sufficiently many hearers can be counted on to feel offended, just as when these words occur assertorically.[3] But, as we shall see, when it comes to evocative terms, contra Dummett, there is no need to depart from the general pattern of explanation.

The semantics of expressive and evocative language is altogether not a simple matter. Choice of the term 'cur' is not the most favourable with which to begin an examination because, in addition to its possessing both derogatory and offensive characteristics, surely, as compared with 'dog', it possesses an additional element of 'descriptiveness'. This is belied by Frege's observation that use of the former may put us in mind of a dog *with an unkempt appearance*. Dictionaries give such defining characteristics as 'mongrel or inferior', 'mangy', or 'surly', which, with the possible exception of the evaluative-sounding 'inferior', are to be counted among the truth-evaluable conditions with which 'cur' is bound.

To articulate precisely what there may be to this word's meaning over and above a descriptive content may not prove easy. To characterize a dog as inferior, for instance, evidently requires some kind of evaluation, and may be thought to involve more than the mere satisfaction of the defining

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[3] I do not wish to appear overly prudish when it comes to discussing certain items of the English lexicon–no matter that they may be in fairly common use–but neither do I wish to cause offense in readers more sensitive than myself. I hereby apologize for any offense caused by the 'mention' of certain expressions in this text. It is interesting to note that hearers very often respond in the characteristic–and semantically definitive–way even when such expressions are put in scare quotes. In reporting another's speech, for example, people commonly go to some length in order to avoid uttering the other's exact words. It is unsurprising, though not uninteresting, to find that various devices have been conventionally adopted as a way of dealing with just this situation.

characteristics. But while it may be pertinent to ask, "Inferior to whom, and by what standard?", this does not imply that 'inferior' is either subjective or non-truth-evaluable. If there is in place some agreed way of determining what standard applies in a given situation for this particular term, and if there also exists a means of settling whether or not, or to what extent, such standards are met, then it will be possible to correctly say that, as a matter of fact, a particular dog *is* inferior. Nor does it support the contention that the term 'inferior' by itself conveys any additional attitude on the part of the speaker toward the object in question, as a predicative occurrence in the antecedent of a conditional statement makes sufficiently clear.

Take 'mongrel'. This looks to give us a better term for comparison. Among its descriptive conditions is that of mixed breeding, especially where this includes the additional factor of unknown ancestry. 'Mongrel' might be thought pejorative, just because possession of those characteristics is viewed by the bulk of the community as something contemptible. Likewise, the nouns 'liar' and 'cheat' possess clearly descriptive elements–easily characterizable within the Fregean framework–so that as a matter of fact someone either is or is not a liar or a cheat. But, because we generally regard lying and cheating as deplorable, it may be felt that actually calling someone a liar or a cheat amounts to uttering a form of words which on their own express a distinctively pejorative attitude on the part of the speaker. Yet it is doubtful whether the meanings of 'liar' and 'cheat' contain any such additional, attitude-conveying element: although it may go against the grain of conventional social wisdom, no semantic paradox is involved in admitting that you do not condemn someone for lying or

cheating. Cf. other supposedly evaluative terms like 'boring', 'delightful', 'funny', 'difficult'.

Safire presents a word whose putative tone[4] is solely of the pejorative variety:

> . . . *revanche* is the French word for "revenge", usually meaning the retaking of lost territory or return to old regimes. The word is always used pejoratively; if you are for economic revanchism, you eschew that word and say instead you favor retaliatory democracy or you're a reciprocitist. *Revanche*, in diplomacy, is never admitted to be sweet. (1993: 16)

To the claim that an individual word by itself imparts an expressive or an evocative character to sentences in which it occurs, we must look to unasserted contexts. For example, both 'If that revanchist succeeds, I'm leaving Mother Russia' and 'Does that revanchist drink vodka?' appear to convey an unfavourable attitude toward the subject. However, it might be argued that this is not due solely to the presence of 'revanchist', but rather, is due to its occurring as grammatical subject, a form which might be supposed to impart on its own a kind of 'assertoric weight' to sentences. Whether or not this is so, we can consider predicative forms, 'Are any of those new deputies revanchist?' and 'If a new deputy is revanchist, he's bound to horde sable'. It might appear that any pejorative element is here stripped away. Clearly, one who utters these sentences does not thereby assert that anyone *is* a revanchist; nor does he speak pejoratively of any particular deputy, so how, it might be asked, could 'revanchist' contribute this character to these utterances? The correctness of these two points notwithstanding, a moment's reflection suffices to show that

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[4] I say 'putative' because this term may be more akin to 'traitor' than to e.g., 'Chink'. Nevertheless, it adequately serves to illustrate the point I wish to make about genuinely expressive words.

simply by using 'revanchist' instead of a neutral equivalent the speaker conveys his contempt toward 'things reciprocitist'.

Here, the condition 'reciprocitists are contemptible' is surely not a stylistic matter. But like the conditions 'Blacks are contemptible', or 'Chinese are contemptible', neither does it make any contribution to determining truth or falsity. Dummett gives as a passing example of a pejorative term the German *Boche* (1981b: 454). He says the condition for applying it to someone–the *grounds* for applying it–is that the person be of German nationality; and the *consequences* of its application are that he is barbarous and more prone to cruelty than other Europeans. Both conditions are involved in the meaning of the word, according to Dummett: neither could be severed without altering its meaning. The distinction between grounds and consequences here seems dubious; but in any case, so far, these conditions put *Boche* on a par with 'mongrel', 'liar' and 'cheat'. No mention is made of any other condition relating to the speaker's attitude. For a genuinely expressive term, this feature is crucial. Although I said this feature does not impinge on truth or falsity, a speaker who calls someone a nigger or Chink and then immediately adds that he does not believe them to be contemptible (on the basis of their race), voices a contradiction perfectly analogous to Moore's paradox involving an assertion conjoined with a denial of belief.

A neglected consideration of some consequence is this: if Frege is right about the identity of sense of 'cur' and 'dog' then the sentences 'This dog is a cur', 'All dogs are curs', and the like, are *analytic*. While there will be no hesitation to accept such a characterization of their converses, I assume

everyone will balk at an account which has this consequence for the sentences above. No doubt this has something to do with the fact that 'cur' and 'dog' differ in sense. But, the characterization as analytic of 'This Black is a nigger' and 'All Chinese are Chinks' will give pause to those who feel no contempt for Blacks or Chinese, and who will not wish, therefore, to be committed to the bare *truth* of such sentences.

In connection with questions of tonality, Dummett also mentions so-called 'honorifics' (1981a: 88). These are word forms prevalent especially in certain Asian languages (Dummett cites Javanese as an example), and used by speakers to signal varying degrees of respect or familiarity, for instance, toward the person addressed. Given his advocacy of the sentence-radical with its accompanying gloss in terms of truth-conditions, it is unsurprising that Dummett uncritically promotes these forms as belonging to the category of tone, since they make no contribution to determining sentential truth-conditions. In Japanese and Korean, where many complex forms abound, some are also a sign of the relative familial, social, or professional status of speakers and hearers. It must be stressed that whether or not the speaker actually feels any respect, or is in fact on familiar terms with the hearer, the form itself conveys such an attitude, or relation, and is thus sufficient for its attribution to him.

Lakoff (1972: 909-914) is surely right in saying that translation of Japanese honorifics into English adjectives like 'honourable' and 'venerable' alters their meaning. I also support her claim that theoretical linguistics must take into account not only superficial syntactic context, but also pertinent social conditions associated with the use of such forms; but I think that the following

discussion shows that the representational character of such expressions is not a matter of Gricean implication.

Despite the admitted lack of any truth-conditional contribution on their part, it is unclear that such expressions are invariably to be consigned to our category of tone. Arguably, they have much in common with other, familiar, expression-types explicable in terms of a central notion of meaning more broadly construed. We may think of examples from our own language which, like 'Sir' and 'Madam', seem to impart an additional element of politeness to various utterances. Better still are common forms of address which relate to gender or marital status, e.g., 'Miss', 'Mrs.,' 'Mr.' and 'Ms.'. We might be tempted by the apparent difference in politeness between 'Sarah Jones' and 'Miss Sarah Jones' to apply the stylistic label to the latter; but the condition 'unmarried woman' is conspicuously neither stylistic nor truth-conditional.

Korean contains special forms whose conditions of correct employment relate not only to a speaker's gender, but also to the social status of both speaker and hearer. It is arguable, I think, that these latter forms on their own convey no *attitude*, of respect, say, towards the person addressed, but only signal an acknowledgment of their particular social standing (whether relative to the hearer or to the community as a whole). Any element of politeness or respect derives not from the forms themselves, but from the act of acknowledgment. That is to say, conformity to this social-linguistic convention is a natural *sign of* politeness or respect on the part of the speaker. But even if they are not attitudinal, there is something more.

For example, suppose Dongmin wants to wish Hoyoung a good journey.[5] If they are of more-or-less equal status and if their relationship is sufficiently close, Dongmin may say, "Jal ga-ra, Hoyoung-a!". If, on the other hand, their relationship is rather distant, Dongmin says, "Jal ga-seyo, Hoyoung-ssi!". However, where Hoyoung is not only junior to Dongmin in terms of their relative status, but is also rather low in terms of absolute status, Dongmin says, "Jal ga-gora, Hoyoung-a!". If the relative situation is the same, but Hoyoung is himself a person of significant status–a married man, say–Dongmin can say, "Jal ga-gena, Hoyoung-i!". Focusing just on differences in the verbal root *ga*, it would appear that, rather than there being any special tonal association, the application conditions of such forms–being a matter of what they are correctly applied *to*–fit a conception of word-meaning broader than that given in terms of conditions determining truth or falsity.

Other similarities exist among our own English diminutives–suffix forms which signify not only smallness, but also youth, familiarity and affection, as well as contempt. The first are exemplified by the suffix '-let' as in 'ringlet', 'booklet' and 'craterlet': where a choice of words is between that of the root word alone or the root word with this suffix, there is no question of anything but how the object has to be for the correct term to apply; nothing tonal is involved. However,

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[5]Thanks to South Korean anthropologist Dr. Ik-Joo Hwang (D.Phil. St. Antony's College, Oxford) for providing me with an extensive example from which this particular bit is taken. Even though he regarded his more inclusive example, with its eight different ways to wish someone a good journey, as itself quite simplified, it nevertheless manages to convey to a foreign speaker just how complex things can get in Korean speech. I hope, however, that the bit which I have extracted is sufficient for demonstrating the point I wish to make here: namely, that not all such non-truth-conditional forms as Dummett consigns to the category of tone actually belong there. According to Dr. Hwang, not all the variations in his examples are considered by Koreans as 'honorific'. In the examples I have used *Jal* is an informal word for 'well', *ga* is the root part of *ga-da*, 'to go', *-a* and *-i* are additives used to call someone (like English vocatives), and *-ssi* is an honorific additive.

among the latter we find the comparatively rare '-kin' as used to form 'lambkin' and 'devilkin'; '-ling', used predominantly to form pejorative variants like 'hireling', 'princeling', 'duckling' and 'worldling'; and also the endings '-y' and '-ie', which enjoy a distinct employment in the formation of pet names and the importation of affection, as 'granny', 'Jenny', 'dearie', 'wifie' and 'cutie' illustrate.

The last group in particular might be compared with the Tamil suffix *-ji*, which is added to personal names as a means of conveying both affection and familiarity; thus *Krishna-ji* and *Ghandi-ji*. Here Dummett may be right: it seems undeniable that suffixes like these latter three serve to convey speakers' attitudes toward the subject in much the same way as our other examples of expressives. Still, there may be slight differences. For instance, with respect to *-ji*, the condition of familiarity might better be described as relational, rather than attitudinal, this form being bound up with a characteristic, or relational fact, concerning the person specified–namely, that he or she is a familiar person (recall the examples of *vous* and *tu*). Such a construal of the condition is more in line with the notion of word-meaning broadly defined. Of course, this amounts to saying only that *-ji* possesses (something akin to) sense; it cannot be taken to deny the existence of an element of tone.

Such forms of expression as those touched on here are admittedly difficult to pin down. It looks impossible to definitively assign a meaning-contribution in every instance to one of the three categories of sense, force, or tone. Recognition of one or two *borderline* forms does not undermine the entire enterprise, of course, but the many examples canvassed thus far suggest that a different way of drawing boundaries would be welcome.

This finally brings us to Dummett's account of evocative expressions. According to Dummett, the explanation of these is unlike that appropriate to any other expression-type. However, his departure from the system sketched so far looks to be founded on a mistaken 'idiolectism' of a kind which he himself criticizes elsewhere (notably, among his criticisms of Frege; cf. 1981b: 114-115, 189). The whole of Dummett's remarks concerning evocative expressions occurs on a single page, and I here quote the chief passage in its entirety:

> The evocative use of language is quite different [from the expressive use]: here the primary purpose is not necessarily fulfilled by the hearer's recognition of the intention underlying the selection of the words. For instance, words may be used with the intention of arousing in the hearers a sense of pathos: this is of course, in part a matter of the content of what is said–of their *sense*, in Frege's technical use–but also in part depends on the manner of expression, i.e., on the tone of the words used. In order that the words should have the desired effect through their tone, it is necessary that the hearer's *impression* of the tone should be one of pathos: if, for example, through accident the words used have, for the hearer, comic or obscene associations, the utterance will have misfired. It will not be saved by the mere fact that the hearer is aware that these associations are private to himself, that the words are ordinarily taken as having pathetic overtones, and it was for this purpose that the speaker used them: for the primary purpose of the evocative use of language does not operate through the hearer's recognition of the speaker's intention, but through their effect in arousing in the hearer a mood or attitude. . . . The evocative use of language does, therefore, depend, in a way in which no other use of language does, upon the dispositions of the individual hearer to react in certain ways. But to conclude lightly from this that tone is always a subjective matter is wrongly to assimilate the expressive to the evocative use, and at the same time to overlook the fact that the two uses between them do not exhaust the function of tone . . . .
>
> (1981a: 88)

A few objectionable points of importance occur in this passage. In the third sentence Dummett speaks of the employment of "words having a desired effect through their tone". But it must be asked, how can the words have a specific *desired* effect for a speaker unless they possess, at least for that speaker, a tone which *he* regularly associates with them? More importantly,

how can they have *this* particular desired effect *through their tone* if their tone is ultimately identified with the effect which they actually produce?

Dummett's picture is flawed by his denial of the role that a knowledge of a community-wide standard of use plays in an individual's correct understanding of these expressions. As with the meaning and use of every form of expression, what is crucial is that individuals bring their use into line with an established standard of correctness, a standard which, for the purposes of explaining the workings of a *language*–as opposed to an idiolect–is to be characterized as belonging to, and accepted by, the group of speakers as a whole.

The presence of definitive community-wide standards vitiates Dummett's example of 'evocative failure'. It is true that if a hearer associates something comic or obscene with a word's occurrence on some particular occasion, where that word is not *standardly* associated with anything comic or obscene, the utterance will 'misfire'. In which case, the hearer simply misunderstands the expression. Either that, or if, as Dummett portrays him, the hearer does in fact know, both that his associations are idiosyncratic and that the word is *ordinarily* taken as having quite different associations, then he does understand the use of that expression. But then, his idiosyncratic associations are simply semantically irrelevant. That a particular utterance 'misfires' is not necessarily indicative of any speaker error, nor of any failure on the part of a hearer to understand him.

In maintaining that the meaning of a particular word is given by associations which individual hearers attach to it, Dummett yields to idiolect. The crucial semantic factor with these expressions just is the response

characteristically evoked in hearers as a body. It is this to which speakers are held accountable: if a speaker intends, on a particular occasion, to prompt an audience response different from the characteristic and familiar one, then, on pain of being misunderstood, he is obliged to make known his deviation, explicitly specifying the intended interpretation. A misfire here is directly attributable to his *mis*use of the evocative expression, since it is he who has departed from the meaning given to it by virtue of its accepted use within a community of speakers.

Let us reconsider both the use of 'taboo words' and 'swearwords', and also the question as to whether there is a genuine subclass of jocular expressions. Most languages, it seems, contain words which are regarded as holy, magic, dangerous or shocking; whose use is restricted to one degree or another to specific situations or speakers. For example, Swan (1980: 589) notes that in some African tribes the names of dead chiefs must not be spoken; and in other societies words for deities or those associated with religious beliefs are often restricted to religious occasions or to use by priests. Otherwise, the use of such words, and often even their mere mention, is considered taboo. Violators proceed at their own risk: they invite the (possibly dire) consequences of breaching these rules.

Yet even where such restrictions–and the consequences of violating them–are perfectly clear and fully known to a body of speakers, it is doubtful that either these rules or the consequences are to be reckoned as ingredients in the *meaning* of these kinds of expressions. They are essential for a knowledge of use, certainly, but not for knowledge of meaning. With the names of dead

African chiefs, and supposing for the sake of argument that such names possess meaning, a taboo which restricts their use to writing has no effect on their meaning. If they are not to be used at all, by anyone, this would show that they have no accepted use, but not that they have no meaning.

Similarly with words whose use is restricted to certain speakers: meaning is not thereby restricted to these speakers (a grammatical point), nor is a knowledge of their meanings.[6] Such words belong to the class which I characterized as being broadly 'dialectal'. It is only a *non*standard use, i.e., a use outside the sphere of currency in which their meanings are established, which gives such words any appearance of possessing some additional element of meaning.

This is not the entire story. Besides taboo words which are 'institutionally' restricted, there are also others, usually relating either to sex or to the elimination of bodily fluids, which are commonly regarded as 'dirty' or shocking. Such words have 'clinical' equivalents (e.g., 'testicles', 'breasts', 'have sexual intercourse', 'defecate', 'urinate') which, though they are words for things which many speakers may view as repugnant, are not themselves so regarded: these words are treated as more polite, or more formal, variants. Use of many of the 'vulgar' versions has often been severely restricted: it was not until comparatively recently that some were allowed to appear in print. But again, relaxation of censorship does not correspond to any change of meaning. Nevertheless, these terms belong with the kinds of broadly 'stylistic' varieties discussed in §2; although, to repeat, we found reason to doubt that such

[6] A point which refutes a semantic argument given by Bernard Williams in support of his claims concerning knowledge of other cultures' 'thick ethical concepts'. See 1986: 143-145.

differences invariably constitute differences in meaning, as opposed to differences in use.

However, there *is* an important difference between these pairs and those discussed earlier, and it has to do with 'evocativeness'. The question is: is the difference between 'have sexual intercourse' and its twin to be reckoned tonal? More importantly, even if it is, is it *also* to be reckoned a difference in meaning? As we have seen, not everything which can be construed as tonal is to be regarded as an ingredient of meaning. Pretty clearly, the vulgarity ascribed to the naughty twin, and especially the offence which it can generally be counted on to provoke in hearers, fall outside the scope of any truth-conditional characterization. As I said above, the notion of a manner of speaking is apt with the use of vulgar expressions, and this inclines us to at least accept them as a variety of tone.

We need to consider again the notion of a standard. I suggested that where a word is used in what may be called its standard setting it is felt not to possess any special tone; so that any distinct effect it apparently possesses *outside* this setting is due not to the word itself, nor less to a change of meaning, but simply to its thus having been used outside the standard setting. With the pair 'sweat'-'perspiration', for instance, we might say by way of explanation that the former is appropriately used in informal or familiar settings, the latter in formal or unfamiliar. Used in their nonstandard contexts–intentionally or otherwise–they are felt to impart to their respective utterances some distinct flavour. In their standard settings no special tone is perceived.

Now it should not have escaped notice that I have described these

situations in such a way that the settings are defined in advance of the use of the two words. But it may be possible to regard them, as Dummett evidently does, as themselves defining the setting:

> The choice of such twins . . . serves to define the proposed *style* of discourse, which, in turn, determines the kind of thing that may appropriately be said. (1991: 122)

I do not say that this can never be the case; but it does not appear that Dummett's way of characterizing such a choice is acceptable as the general account. Suppose, for example, attending a formal College dinner you find yourself seated with the Rector's elderly wife. I do not think that whatever choice you happen to make–e.g., you exclaim, "I wish the *f***ing* butler would *bloody well* fill my glass!"–*determines* the kind of thing that may appropriately be said. Well, Dummett says that it serves to define the *proposed* style of discourse; but even that concession does not get it right. Surely, you are not proposing to the Rector's wife that your conversation be pursued in a vulgar manner. If the use of such words defines anything at all, it merely defines the character of the very utterance in which they have just been used. Precisely what the choice of such twins depends on, in the most general case, is the extra-linguistic setting, and not the other way round.

Trouble is, where should we locate the standard setting of such taboo words? There seems to be no clear division between a standard and a nonstandard setting. Though admittedly vulgar, it seems insufficient merely to place them alongside (or beneath) informal terms, like slang, since even in extremely informal contexts these words can be counted on to cause a stir among certain hearers. It is doubtful that such expressions, especially when

used non-literally as *obscenities* (i.e., swearwords), have anything like a recognizably standard setting. While it may be generally true that one most often swears in the company of people one knows well, people in one's own 'social circle', and that consequently, swearing can be taken to indicate membership in a group, this again is a matter of *natural* significance.

Then how are we to explain the meaning of such words? If a non-native speaker asks us what the vulgar twin means, do we not rightly inform him that it means 'to have sexual intercourse'? Yes; but clearly, we cannot leave it at that. It would be completely disingenuous not to provide him with a caution as to the nature of the consequences which his use of the word in certain circumstances was likely to provoke. Some such supplementation is essential for his proper understanding of the *use* of the term (as well as for his own well-being, possibly). We might also add that should he hear someone utter it in certain circumstances, he himself ought to react in certain sorts of ways: e.g., we might instruct him to scold a young child for using such language. As an alternative characterization of the supplementation, we might be tempted to say that use of this word also means *that* hearers are likely to take offence at its use. But (again a grammatical point), this applies more aptly to use than to meaning: unlike the formula 'S's use of *w* means *that* . . .', the formula '*w* means *that* . . .' is unintelligible. But, as with the pair 'sweat'-'perspiration', for which the supplementary account of their restrictions does not feature in an explanation of meaning, so too, it might seem, qualifications concerning use of taboo words are not after all associated with their meanings.

When used in their literal senses these words might best be understood

as a form of slang–'vulgar slang', as the dictionary says. But this does not account for their entire use. Used in a non-literal way, taboo words are called swearwords, and are said to have a different meaning, e.g.: "*Sod* off!", "Oh, *hell* if I know!", "*Jesus*, it's a beautiful day!", "Where's the *f***ing* light switch?", "It's *bloody* broken again" (cf. Swan, 1980: 589). Here they are used to express strong, often violent emotions, usually associated with surprise, anger, disappointment or contempt. These feelings or attitudes, like those associated with derogatory expressions, fall on the side of the speaker: the words convey to his hearers how things are with him–but without actually *asserting* that things are this way. The imperatives '*Piss* off!', '*Sod* off!' and '*F*** off!' have a common meaning: 'Go away!' But they can also convey varying degrees of anger or annoyance on the speaker's part. And this condition, properly, belongs to their meanings.

As I said above, certain words can be considered sacred, or magic; also dangerous, or shocking. But again (another grammatical point), is it their use which is shocking, or their meaning? Someone might say: it is the *manner* of speaking which is shocking. True enough, perhaps; but does this take us anywhere? The manner of speaking has been identified with the occurrence of a particular word. So the manner of speaking is shocking precisely because of the particular word involved–which means that the occurrence of the word is still the culprit. But: its use, or its meaning? Might one not object that a word (or, its occurrence in a sentence) is shocking *because* of its meaning, because of what it means, and not because of its use? Or, what may come to the same thing, that *any* use of the word is shocking because of what it means? Unfortunately,

this has a question-begging air. 'The word is shocking because of its meaning': well, if the reactionary shock, as the standard evocative characteristic, is considered part of the meaning, then of course. On this basis, we should say that because of its meaning use of the expression 'have sexual intercourse' is *not* shocking, and we could suppose that there is after all a difference in meaning between this expression and its vulgar counterpart. But this ignores the possibility that the difference between the two expressions is simply a matter of brute fact concerning their respective *uses*. It does not yet resolve the question one way or the other.

This discussion has involved us in the making of some subtle distinctions, and I confess that I am not entirely sure as to whether or not an evocative aspect of the use of swearwords is *never* to be understood as belonging to their meaning. If we are successfully to reach a definitive judgment on this matter, one thing that we may need to get clearer about is the relationship between words and sentences. For instance, it is uncertain whether it makes sense to speak of a word in isolation, as if it could be examined apart from its sentential occurrences. And yet, we cannot frame any coherent conception of 'sentencehood' without some prior conception of what a words is, since it is these with which sentences are constructed.

While it may be amiss to speak of words possessing characteristics, considered apart from any sentential setting, if we can observe some characteristic of a particular word which it possesses independently of any *particular* use or setting, we might be inclined to attribute to the word possession of a characteristic which is independent of the word's various uses.

If this is right, it may after all be correct to attribute to evocative expressions an additional element of meaning. For, just as pejorative words convey a speaker's attitude–and the same one–in all their occurrences, assertoric or otherwise, and we characterized this as a matter of their meaning, similarly, then, if a word like our naughty twin also manifests the same conditions in every sentence-type in which it features, it does so independently of any particular use. But now, the objection would seem to be that this does not really take us outside use; it merely reveals a feature to which *every* use of the word can lay claim.

However, one important point has already surfaced. Both derogatory words like 'revanchism' and polite words like 'perspiration' can be characterized as defining a manner of speaking; the difference I pointed to involved the additional element of expressivity attaching to the former. But there is a further difference which may have significance for this query, concerning the fact that 'perspiration', but not 'revanchism' is to be explained by recourse to the notion of a standard setting. For an understanding of the subclass of derogatory, or more generally, expressive words, this idea does not come into play. Possibly, the same holds for obscene words as well.

The sentiment that obscenities have no place in 'polite company' looks to be fairly widespread. Yet, it is doubtful whether many who share this view would allow that obscenities have a *proper* place in any company. Against this it might be claimed that it is proper, or permissible, at least, to use such words only in the company of others who commonly use them. This gives the appearance of marking a standard, any deviation from which imparts the

shocking character with which they are commonly associated. This appearance is deceptive. Although many speakers who frequently use such words apparently attach no particular 'shock value' to them when used in the company of certain others, it would be a mistake to regard this as defining their *standard* meaning and use. Rather, it is just that among certain individuals there is a kind of tacit agreement that use of such langauge is permissible–in the sense that no offence is given or taken by its use. The agreement is, in effect, to ignore or suspend the characteristic stance generally adopted towards their use. The proposal that it is permissible to use these words only among others who permit their use fails to define any special group or setting. It amounts to saying nothing more than that it is permissible among those for whom it is permissible. Rather than setting a standard, this merely constitutes a special case in the use of obscene language.

What is the upshot of this discussion? The suggestion is that swearwords, at least, are, like the subclass of derogatory words, explainable without recourse to the kind of standard that helps describe the use of the other varieties of tone; and that like derogatory words they are expressive. But they possess an additional character, also not amenable to the idea of a standard setting, which following Dummett I have called 'evocative', and which relates to the consequences of their use, as characterized by the feelings which they standardly evoke (or provoke) in hearers. In the end, it appears not implausible to accept this feature as belonging to their *meaning*.

The explanation of supposed 'jocular' expressions follows the same route. As with expressive and evocative words, there is apparently no such

thing as a standard setting for the use of jocular expressions. Naturally, one may query the very existence of such words. I cannot find that Frege makes any mention of such words; but neither, apparently, does he give any attention to evocatives. On the other hand, although no examples of jocular words are to be found among Dummett's many pairs, recall his mention of 'comic' associations in the passage on evocatives.

Whether or not a language actually contains any such expressions, there is nothing which rules out its acquiring some; it is solely a matter of whether sufficiently many speakers were, or were to become, characteristically 'tickled', say, by their use. Sufficient, that is, to bring about in the linguistic community a recognition of such 'comic associations' as constituting a standard for their correct use. Recall that *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, for one, employs a distinct 'jocular' word label.

In *The Language of Humour* Walter Nash claims words are neither intrinsically poetic nor intrinsically funny; their supposedly humorous character owes to their use in jokes and comic narrative:

> Passing fancy suggests that some items are intrinsically humorous: some sounds, for example, in certain clusters or sequences (*clank, squelch*); some words of rare occurrence or extraordinary form (*skullduggery, ramshackle, shenanigans, malfeasance, disgruntlement*); . . . . The search for the intrinsically funny, however, like the search for the intrinsically poetic, is a forlorn enterprise. The most likely conjecture . . . is that they have no humorous power in their own right, but are *residually* humorous, i.e., they take a colouring from repeated use in jokes and comic narrative. . . . They do not become intrinsically humorous through being constantly used for humorous purposes. . . . So often, when we are pleased by a humorous text, we attribute a peculiar power to its vocabulary–'*Lank*! What a funny word to use! Why, it even *sounds* funny!–etc. But examination will always show that these apparently dynamic items are not self-charged.
>
> (1985: 126-128)

The problem with this account is not so much whether or not words have

any 'intrinsic' character, as whether a 'humorous habit' has become so firmly established as to constitute an accepted standard which itself governs the further employment and understanding of particular expressions. It is also dubious that comic expressions belong in the first instance to a restricted field of use, in the way that poetic expressions do. The appellation 'manner of speaking' applies to the use of genuinely jocular words, but the thing that sets them apart from other varieties which this characterization also suits is precisely the effect characteristically produced *in hearers*–a feature which encourages their inclusion as a subclass of evocative expressions.

A dictionary search for words accompanied by the 'jocular' label requires patience, but is rewarded by turning up 'discombobulation' (a state of confusion and disorientation), 'argy-bargy' (a heated argument), 'bailiwick' (the domain of one's authority or expertise), 'costard' (an archaic word for the head), 'perigrinate' (to rove or wander), absquatulate (depart, decamp–derived from 'abscond', 'squattle' and 'perambulate') and 'contraption' (an odd-looking gadget or machine–reportedly used both pejoratively and jocularly, depending on the surrounding context). Some of these may even 'sound funny', as Nash says; but not all do, and it is irrelevant whether they do or not. But the aptness of the label is suspect: with 'contraption', for instance, it seems to be the Heath Robinson-esque character of the object, rather than any character of the word, which prompts amusement. It is also relatively unimportant *why* speakers should find any words humorous–that is, how it comes about that a group of speakers reacts in a certain predictable way. What matters is whether such a reaction becomes so firmly attached to their use that it can be exploited, and

more importantly, whether it be something to which knowledgeable speakers take their use and that of others to be held accountable.

Prospective jocular expressions must evoke a humorous response in hearers familiar with their meaning even in unasserted contexts: 'If I hadn't become so discombobulated, we'd have found our way out of this swamp by now'; or 'Have you fixed that contraption yet?'. Nash's idea of an *original* setting may, of course, be correct for certain examples. But this cannot be construed as constituting a *standard* setting, within which the words have no special tone: on the contrary, jocular words will produce their characteristic effect in jokes and comic narratives as well as in ordinary, everyday speech.

Dummett's explanation of the workings of evocative expressions has the unwelcome consequence that it places them outside the realm of cognition altogether, thereby threatening meaning's epistemological character. Finally, evocative words are not individually subjective, as Dummett implies. Minimally, they must be *inter*subjective: the evocative use of language depends, not upon the disposition of any *one* hearer to react in idiosyncratic ways, but on the disposition of individuals within a community to react in recognizably similar ways. Perhaps even more emphatically than questions and injunctions, evocative expressions signal the need to take into account, not only conditions relating to the grounds for correct employment, but crucially, those relating to the standard *consequences* with which correct employment is also bound.

2.4 Adverbs and hyponyms: still strolling

There remain two sorts of expressions which Frege regarded as

contributing to the tone of sentences which we need to consider. These correspond to his examples of the adverbs 'still' and 'already' in the first instance, and the family group 'walk', 'stroll' and 'saunter' in the second. Both cases, I shall urge, are to be understood in terms of the contributions which the individual expressions make to the *sense*, and not to the tone, of sentences in which they occur. However, insofar as Frege is right in thinking that their respective meanings, or differences in meaning, are not truth-conditional, the natural consequence is that word-meaning is not, in general, to be explained in terms of sentential truth-conditions. Moreover, if we are to retain the idea that the meanings of sentences are determined by the meanings of their constituent expressions, it follows that the notion of sentence-meaning equally is not to be explained in the general case in terms of truth-conditions.

In 'The Thought', during the course of a brief digression into some of the ways in which, as he says, "the contents of a sentence often go beyond the thoughts expressed by it", Frege declares,

> One should remember words like 'still' and 'already' too. With the sentence 'Alfred has still not come' one really says 'Alfred has not come' and, at the same time, hints that his arrival is expected, but it is only hinted. It cannot be said that, since Alfred's arrival is not expected, the sense of the sentence is therefore false.
>
> (1918: 24)

As I noted in §2, Frege's talk of 'hinting' may not be entirely out of place with such examples; but meant in the ordinary sense, it is inaccurate. As we saw with the pair 'dog'-'cur', and with other examples such as the pair 'and'-'but', it is not so much that some conditions are hinted at–a matter of mere guesswork–but that the satisfaction of these conditions is quite clearly represented as obtaining by the speaker's use of the particular expression. The

speaker does not so much as *state* that these conditions obtain; nevertheless he does convey this by the words he uses.

Frege's claim that the two sentences possess identical sense suggests the acceptability of the biconditional '"Alfred has still not come" is true iff Alfred has not come'. But although the reading 'If "Alfred has still not come" is true, then Alfred has not come' is, as Frege contends, unexceptionable, the reverse reading is not so straightforward. What are we to say about 'If Alfred has not come, then "Alfred has still not come" is true', in the case where Alfred's arrival is not expected by the speaker? Something is not right with this use of 'still': alteration of some kind is required.

Perhaps such a misuse of 'still' does not license an ascription of falsity to the consequent, and thus to the biconditional as a whole. But it is not too difficult to imagine cases for which such a verdict is appropriate. In answer to a query, "What–you're *still* here?", one might legitimately reply, "No, I'm not *still* here–I went away for two hours and returned just this minute". Stressing the adverb, the respondent contradicts the presumption which this qualification signals in the query. In such cases, the adverb falls within the scope of the assertion sign, and so contributes, on the Fregean picture, to the utterance's sense.

In other cases 'still' sometimes falls under what is negatable and sometimes does not: compare 'Williams doesn't still drink in the afternoon' and 'Williams still doesn't drink in the afternoon'. To avoid the absurd conclusion that 'still' vacillates in meaning according to whether it straightforwardly falls within a sign for utterance-force–i.e., that it sometimes contributes a distinctive

tone to utterances and at other times does not–we must assign it a univocal, but non-truth-conditional, meaning.

Similarly for 'already'. The inappropriateness of 'Alfred is already here', said at the precise moment of Alfred's arrival, is clear; but can use of 'already' be faulted to such an extent that a statement containing it is reckoned false? Could it be contradicted by a counter-assertion in which 'already' falls within the scope of negation? By something like "What do you mean? Alfred's not *already* here–he's just arrived; what's more, he's late!"? The grammatically preferred response, employing the counterpart of 'already' for negative contexts, would normally be "Alfred's not here *yet*". However, in the case just described, when Alfred is in fact present, this statement is not only inappropriate, it is false. Again, whether or not a particular utterance containing 'already' can be reckoned false, the set of conditions associated with its meaning ought not vary from one context to the other.

I said that 'still' and 'already' were examples of a kind. Other examples of this kind, of which there are many, include such expressions as 'yet', 'even' and 'too', as in 'I haven't visited Nepal *yet*', '*Even* Norman Lamont has to balance his chequebook' and 'Believe it or not, Maggie Thatcher has feelings, *too*'. To convey that an action is expected we use 'yet': 'Have you met your supervisor yet?' –'No, I haven't met him yet'. Although acceptable in questions and negative sentences, 'yet' is unacceptable in certain assertoric contexts: * 'Yes, I have met him yet'; the proper reply being 'Yes, I have met him already'. This does not mean that 'yet' and 'already' are simply negatively and positively oriented variations of the same theme. There are assertoric uses of 'yet' as in

'We have yet to meet him'; and compare the interrogatives 'Have you seen Canada yet?' and 'Have you seen Canada already?'. Note that whereas 'still' and 'already' are easily accommodated by the sentence-radical (*It is the case -that he is still (already) there; Is it the case -that he is still (already) there; Make it the case -that he is still (already) there*), 'yet' does not fit into the radical of any of these basic forms, because of the ungrammaticality of * 'he is there yet' (except where used with the sense of 'still'). Yet another blow to the sentence-radical approach.

Similarly, 'still' sometimes pairs with 'any more', 'any longer' and 'no longer': 'Do you still smoke Cuban cigars?' –'No, I don't smoke them any more' ('any longer', or, 'I no longer smoke them'). Such expressions do not always find their way into an account of meaning given in terms of truth- or falsity-conditions; nevertheless, in any explanation of meaning which distinguishes sense from tone, their respective contributions to sentence meaning must be regarded as belonging to the former category, as opposed to the latter.

The second group of expressions Frege consigns to tone is comprised of families of individual 'hyperonyms' and 'hyponyms'. In Frege's example of 'walk'-'stroll'-'saunter', 'walk' is the general or core word–the hyperonym–and the latter two–the hyponyms–signify particular ways of walking. Other hyponyms in this family include, e.g., 'stride' and 'amble'. Examples of this kind of relationship are quite familiar: we distinguish different 'ways of looking' with hyponyms like 'glance', 'peer', 'stare', 'gaze', 'peek' and 'peep'.

It should be obvious that the difference between 'walk' and its hyponyms

affects truth and falsity. Hyponyms contain a built-in modifier, as it were, signifying a particular kind of walking. True, someone *strolling* along the river is *walking* along it; but the reverse may be untrue: they might be walking hastily. This raises the question as to the relationship among the various hyponyms: how exactly do they differ in meaning? Could it be that the difference between 'stroll', 'saunter' and 'amble' is to be explained in terms of tone?

It might be tempting to think, as Frege did, that there is something 'poetic' about these particular words, or that they relate to particular images called up in the mind of the speaker or hearer. These options are way off beam. Signifying particular kinds of walking, they are not intersubstitutable *salva veritate*. Strolling differs from sauntering, and both differ from ambling. This is reflected at the level of truth and falsity, despite the possibility of competent speakers being incapable of providing such a discriminating explanation.

Ostensive teaching–this is how one strolls, this is sauntering, this ambling–displays in what their likenesses and differences consist. True, all three terms can mean 'to walk slowly, and more or less aimlessly, especially in the open air'. In many cases, possibly little or nothing hinges on the exact choice; nevertheless, the differences are there, reflected in the words themselves, and thus are ripe for exploitation by competent speakers.

The same holds for different 'ways of looking', e.g., staring and gazing. This is not to deny a place to tonality: cf. 'peep' and 'peek'. As verbs signifying the act of looking, both terms relate to an attempt to see something hidden, or what can only be viewed furtively. Probably they are not clearly distinguishable in meaning. *Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms* says that 'peep' may be

more dignified or less childish than 'peek'. Plausibly, this could be construed as a tonal difference. But there are other, more substantive differences. According to *Collins English Dictionary*, as nouns denoting something seen by peeping or peeking, 'peep' is favoured, as in 'the peep of dawn'. Such nuances are not attributable to tone; but the poles of truth and falsity are also too crude for characterizing such conditions. More reason, then, for relinquishing the claim to truth's centrality in favour of a more comprehensive formulation.

2.5 Conclusion: use v. meaning

In connection with the discussion of this chapter, the pair 'bet'-'wager' provides an interesting example. It is doubtful that these two words differ, either in meaning or in use, in any of the ways discussed earlier. For the latter *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* gives only the identity statement, "wager = bet"; in *The Shorter Oxford* which, as we saw, includes among its style register the category 'formal', no mention is made of any special or restricted use for either word. So, are these two words synonymous? Are they everywhere interchangeable *salva significatione*? There is one colloquial or slang use which evidently does not permit substitution: the reply "You bet", meaning 'you may be sure'. The implicit certainty of outcome suggests it may be a shortened form of 'you can bet (on it)'; a more suggestive possibility sees this certainty as related to 'you bet you'; hence the slangy 'You betcha' (sometimes 'you bet ya'). Perhaps this expression is best treated as *idiomatic*, being of a kind requiring piecemeal learning; in which case it does not undermine the suggested synonymy.

This pair provides a good case for strict synonymy. Others which readily spring to mind are optional superlative or comparative forms like 'craziest'-'most crazy', and 'angrier'-'more angry'. There is nothing especially troubling or problematic about the presence of such pairs; certainly nothing to vex a theorist of meaning. It may be that for a logically perfect language such as Frege envisaged such pairs are better proscribed; but why should they be regarded as a *defect*–especially of natural language? Probably the presence of a second term is thought to be superfluous, manifesting some sort of 'inefficiency'. After all, why retain two expressions which do exactly the same work? A fair enough question, I suppose, but not one to which we ought to pledge allegiance, if what is to mind is an active revision of ordinary practice.

Certainly, it is not difficult to appreciate how such a situation might occur: one or more regional terms might eventually become adopted by the larger body of speakers indiscriminately; or a word with a more-or-less restricted stylistic usage (e.g., a 'formal' variant) might find its way into common parlance. If, however, the existence of strict synonyms were quite widespread–an extreme situation being one in which every expression had an identical twin–there could be cause for concern, and we might justifiably and consciously set about to streamline the language. On the other hand, language use appears sufficiently self-regulating, so that one or another expression naturally drops out of favour and becomes archaic, cf. 'truly' and 'verily'. Naturally, this takes time; probably it is something which goes largely unnoticed, save perhaps by linguists and etymologists. However this may be, the presence of a small number of expressions with a legitimate claim to synonymy causes no trouble–neither

theoretically nor, more especially, practically.

One question which, so far as I can determine, has never been broached, concerns the relation of the notion of sentence- or utterance-meaning to that of tone. We have the notions of utterance-force and sentence-sense, but how does the concept of tonality relate to the general notion of meaning as it applies to these larger units? Where a sentence contains only a single tonal expression, or more than one, but all of a single variety, it is unproblematic to speak of the distinctive tone of an entire sentence: it may be polite or pejorative, poetic or slangy, and so forth. Yet, unlike the notion of sentence-sense, the idea of sentence-tonality–if it prove to be coherent–appears to have been completely overlooked. Specifically, what is to be said about the tone of a sentence which possesses *distinct* varieties of tone? On the face of it, no one general characterization relates to the 'compositional' structure of sentences in the same way that truth (or falsity) purports to do with respect to the notion of sense. This might appear ruinous for the entire project of articulating a general formula for the notion of sentence-meaning. Such extremism is unwarranted. The varieties of tone we have sorted can still be subsumed under the general banner, 'manner of speaking', but without insisting that every particular sentence, or utterance, be possessed of only a single overall tone. One who utters, "Christ, that damned Chink perspired all over my little wifie's new *chemise*!", speaks in a complex manner: the utterance is pejorative and vulgar and blasphemous; but it is also contains elements of politeness (odd as it sounds in this context), affection, and foreignness. The notion of tone and the compositionality of sentence-meaning are therefore not incompatible.

Throughout much of this chapter I touched upon a distinction between linguistic meaning and natural meaning. With respect to the idea of word meaning, the suggestion was that this is more a matter of a word's being a sign *for,* as opposed to its being a sign *of*, something or other. Frege, as we have seen, mistakenly categorizes such linguistically meaningful expression-types as sentence adverbs, interjections and expressives as contributing nothing but tone to sentences in which they feature, and he compounds this mistake by–or it may be that it is a result of–characterizing them as signs *of* various attitudes.

The usefulness of this distinction for discriminating our varieties of tone might be queried. With the pair 'before'-'ere', I said that both are signs *for* the same temporal relation. Nevertheless, it might be felt that use of the latter is additionally a sign *of* something. It is not easy to make this cogent. For instance, I should not want to say that use of 'ere' is a sign *of* the speaker waxing poetic. It cannot naturally signify a poetic manner of speech, because this is just what it *constitutes*: cf. 'That badge signifies that he is a Marine'. And while it may fairly be claimed that 'ere' is used *for* speaking in this manner, 'used for' is not synonymous with 'sign for'; it means something like 'used for the purpose of'. Likewise, 'sweat' and 'perspiration' are signs *for* the same thing; and even if we insist on a natural relationship on the part of either to the speaker or his audience, this will not feature in an account of the tone, or more especially, the meaning, of either word.

With expressives and evocatives the case may differ. 'Chink' is a sign *for* things Chinese; but it is a pejorative word for such things. Can it be maintained that it is therefore both a word *for* things Chinese and *for* (expressing) a

pejorative attitude towards them? A characterization of the expressive aspect of 'Chink' in terms of its being a sign *of* this attitude may be thought more appealing. But since this suggests a merely natural association between word and attitude, it will not do; for as we have seen, this association enjoys a properly semantic status.

By way of summing up then, this investigation into the notion of tone finds it useful to recognize a genuine category to which *some* non-truth-conditional character of certain expressions can be assigned, and which can be given a general gloss in terms of the 'manners of speaking' it embraces. However, not all the expressions which Frege and Dummett consign to this category actually belong. For instance, the difference between synonymous 'dialectal' words like 'elevator' and 'lift' is not one of tonality. We have also found that tonality is not invariably a matter of meaning: for instance, the difference between 'cannot' and its informal counterpart 'can't'. In some cases tonality is a matter of use only; in others it may involve meaning as well, as pejorative expressions suggest. A tonal characterization is inapposite for those non-stylistic conditions associated with expressive forms like 'Chink' and 'dearie' which implicitly convey an attitude or signify a relation. It is equally inexpedient for conjunctions, and for adverbs like 'still' and 'already'. Added to the inadequacies of the sentence-radical, this strongly supports my larger claim that truth-conditionality cannot form the central pillar of a theory of meaning.

Part Three

The Representational Character of Meaning

Up to this point, criticism of Dummett's model has focused largely on two related flaws: the lack of fit with many ordinary sentence-types, and the attendant lack of explanatory role for the concept of truth-conditionality with respect to many component words. The corollary that sameness and difference of meaning are explicable in terms of truth-conditions is also undermined by many near-synonyms for which this instrument is simply too blunt (§1). Taken together, these inadequacies motivate the search for a more comprehensive formulation. At their most basic, sentences are representational. This familiar truism points us in the right direction, and leads to a general formula in terms of 'correctly making things out to be', an improvement on the truth-based account, which neatly reorganizes Dummett's categories of sense, force and tone (§2). The restricted scope of utterance-force for even simple declarative sentences highlights the importance of elementary grammatical considerations for the analysis of meanings (§3), and such considerations aid in distinguishing a theory of meaning both from a 'theory of understanding', and from a 'theory of language' within which it is centrally embedded.

3.1 Shades of meaning: exact and precise

An appeal to truth looks unlikely to take us far in explaining differences in meaning between such near synonyms as 'close' and 'shut', or 'precisely' and

'exactly', pairs for which the supplementary notion of tone is inexpedient. Hence, another reason for dissatisfaction with T-sentences: across a wide range of uses intersubstitutivity has no effect on the truth of their putative meaning-giving biconditionals. True, coextensiveness is not synonymy; yet no difference in 'presentation' discriminates 'Close the door' from 'Shut the door'. For Dummett, though, questions of sameness and difference of meaning are relatively unimportant, the crucial expression being 'to know the meaning'. Accordingly, he says, an account of synonymy is at best an inessential by-product (1981a: 92).

Although one might concede the non-centrality of synonymy, it is no small matter if an elucidation of meaning is completely silent on this point. Revealing that different expressions possess the same meaning does not, of course, give any clue as to what their shared meaning is. Furthermore, it is too great a demand that competent speakers always be capable of providing an explicit account of the different conditions guiding their choices between such closely related expressions. Still, a recognition of synonymy or otherwise must be reflected in practice if speakers are to be ascribed a knowledge of the respective meanings. The notions of synonymy and 'knowing the meaning' are thus not entirely separable. Any *theoretical* account of meaning which fails either to say or to show in what sameness and difference of meaning consists is to be faulted on that score.

In this respect, the well-known truth-based formulae are deficient. Taken together, the theorems '"The bank is closed" is true iff the bank is closed' and '"The bank is shut" is true iff the bank is shut' give us no grasp of any difference

between 'close' and 'shut'. This deficiency persists whether truth is wholly captured by such a 'deflationary' scheme, or whether it is filled out, as Dummett says it must be, by something more full-blooded. Neither are lexical axioms entirely trouble-free: '*shut* signifies shut' and '*close* signifies close' are especially uninformative in this respect. As we shall later see, more explicit forms fare little better: '*To shut* is to . . .' and '*To close* is to . . .' *may* be filled out with different conditions; but these are not invariably aligned with sentential truth-evaluability.

Doubtless, the frequent intersubstitutability of 'close' and 'shut' imparts an initial air of synonymy; nevertheless, distinctive nuances are detectable. We say 'Applications are now closed', not 'Applications are now shut'; and one closes, but does not shut, an opening; one closes a park or a church to the public. The different strength of the injunctions 'Close your mouth!' and 'Shut your mouth!' may invite tonal characterization, yet the latter's greater insistence relates to the idea of a closure which allows for no *egress*. A bank is closed to business, but if the building is shut, ingress and egress are effectively barred. This does not entail that if the building is closed, it can be false to call it shut. The difference relates not to any manner or degree of closedness, so that something is shut if and only if it is closed *securely*, for instance–cf. 'Close your eyes tight' and 'Shut your eyes tight'–but it shows up in the kinds of things to which one but not the other can be applied. Applications are closed but not shut because they are not the kind of thing that can or cannot *escape*, so to speak.

Truth may still hope for a prominent role in the idea of a *word's*

application, individual words being amenable to characterization as *true of* something: '*w* is true of *x*', or more generally, '*w* is true of Σ', Σ being the set of objects to which *w* may be applied. Undeniably, conditions relating to a word's range of application are tightly bound up with its meaning. Still, we want to be told *why* one word and not another can be applied in this or that case. Even where a fuller description is given of the kinds of things to which an expression applies, the range of biconditionals featuring these words at best only *indirectly* points to such differences.

The difficulty here rests primarily with falsity, with what we are to make of a *mis*application of *w*. Applying *w* to an object not belonging to Σ will often render an utterance *inappropriate*, not false. Even if we extend the biconditional formula to incorporate this further condition, specifying that S_w is true iff *both* P_w and *x* belongs to Σ, falsity is too crude an assessment if the latter condition does not obtain. We shut out, but do not close out the light; and close, but do not shut ranks. We close a gap, and shut someone in or out. 'Close', then, appears to have the sense of 'drawing together things spaced apart'; 'shut' on the other hand appears distinguishable by its taking the sense of a 'closure preventing movement into, and especially out of a space'. What is true of one is not false of the other: asymmetry reveals the need for a broader characterization of the bi-polarity.

Perhaps even more difficult to distinguish are 'exact' and 'precise'. Along with 'correct', 'accurate' and 'right', these are comparable when signifying conformity to a standard, fact or truth. But here, too, distinct shades of meaning are discernible. 'Exact' emphasizes the strictness or rigour of agreement,

neither excessive nor deficient, as with 'an exact copy, science, or likeness', or 'someone's exact words'. 'Precise', on the other hand, stresses sharpness of definition, as with 'precise images, instruments, or statements of principles'. A precise copy is a copy whose details are sharp, but an exact copy is one which is in every way like some other. Although these two terms are almost always interchangeable, conditions associated with their correct employment do not perfectly coincide. This is not attributable solely to a difference in the kinds of things to which each is correctly applied: a precise image, for instance, is one which is exact in every detail. But a different range of application shows up in actual use; and the differences in associated conditions which make for differences in application are just too subtle for truth.

Many expressions involve fine-grained shades of meaning: cf. 'talk'-'speak', and 'ill'-'sick'. Modifiers like 'even' and 'too' also come to mind: cf. 'Mary *even* wore a dress for the occasion', or 'I like ice cream, *too*'. These contribute nothing toward determining the respective sentential truth-conditions; nonetheless, they are obviously informative. So, too, with certain occurrences of reflexive pronouns, true-false poles being too crude for discriminating 'I spoke with the Queen' and 'I myself spoke with the Queen'.

True-false poles look impotent in the face of the pair 'likes playing' and 'likes to play'. Sentence meanings are sensitive to differences in word and form–what could be more trite? Bolinger even suggests that subtle differences attend the presence or absence of the word 'that' in, e.g., 'Did I mention I'm vegetarian?' and 'Did I mention *that* I'm vegetarian?' (1977: 9). It matters not that with some one particular sentence or other no appreciable difference can

be discerned with respect to the determination of its truth-conditions: the meaning of a word relates to its *entire* range of occurrences. The sentences 'She has two ribbons' and 'She has exactly two ribbons' exhibit no difference in Fregean sense. Compositionality dictates, however, that they differ according to–no surprise here–the contribution of 'exactly'. Likewise with other possible replacements of 'exactly': e.g., 'only', 'merely', and so on. Such examples further support a distinction between explicit and implicit forms of affirmation, and there may even be a place for Frege's talk of hinting other than as a characterization of tone. But even though they are not assertive in character, neither is their informativeness a matter of guesswork.

3.2 General formula: making out to be

If the sentence-radical approach is flawed, and truth does not occupy a central place in the analysis of meaning, then what formulation can supply the desired generality and systematicity? Here we come full circle. I began this essay with the most obvious and trivial-sounding observation: speakers express thoughts and convey information by using language, which is to say, by uttering sentences by which they represent things as being a certain way. Dummett observes that "learning to use [language] as a medium of discourse involves coming to grasp it as a means of representing reality" (1991: 106). Rundle suggests that in asserting something a speaker "purports to represent things as they are" (1979: 106). And Soames declares that "the central semantic fact about language is that it carries information about the world", adding that "a sentence . . . represents the world as being a certain way . . .". (1989: 575). At

this level of generality there looks to be little room for disagreement; but, while the word-world connection is surely welcome, if a reduction to truth is rejected, the hope of its elucidation in such general terms may be frustrated by their seeming triviality.

Too often, however, what lies closest to view is most easily overlooked. Supposing important truths to require deep, if not technical, explanations, we forsake familiar forms which, with little emendation perhaps, may better suit our purposes. That representationality constitutes such a fundamental feature of language suggests that it ought to figure prominently in any general semantics. For his part, Soames does not offer the general formulation as an alternative to the truth-based account: his interest concerns the relation of a knowledge of truth-conditions to linguistic competence, and within this context he does not differentiate the two formulations. Nevertheless, the difference is not insignificant, and I suggest that such a characterization, or one closely similar, is both necessary and sufficient for capturing in an acceptably general way the constitutive principles of meaning.

Notice that Soames' dictum is not limited to assertions. Rundle's suggestion above can also be generalized to all sentence types, via the innocuous-sounding formula, 'making things out to be a certain way' (cf. 1990: 116-119). The idea here is that a formulation in terms of 'things being a certain way' is broader than one involving truth, and is therefore better able to accommodate expressions and linguistic forms which either escape or are mishandled by the narrower formulation. A workable biconditional would be: an utterance is correct if and only if things are as it represents them to be. This

formula marks an improvement on 'things being as *P* says they are', the application of which is most naturally restricted to assertoric utterances by the presence of 'says' in the formulation (cf. Wittgenstein, 1961: 4.062: "A sentence is true if things are as we say they are by means of it"). Additionally, substituting correctness for truth respects the fact that not all representing is effected in a truth-evaluable manner.[1] Truth, then, is best seen as a special case which is in no way central to the idea of linguistic representationality.

It is a straightforward matter to show that *both* the general notions of word-meaning and linguistic form can be given in terms of the explanatorily prior concept of sentence-meaning thus characterized. Despite the jettisoning of the sentence-radical, a distinction between sense and force is preserved, or rather, is subsumed, by the difference between words and linguistic form, according to the different kinds of conditions appropriate to each. Sense is to be understood in terms of the contribution which individual words or expressions make to what sentences represent. This is a function of their being signs *for* something or some condition; and though this gives us a suitable connection to extralinguistic conditions, there is no call to construe the meaning as an entity. Nor is there any special problem with words which occur without explicit force: adverbs like 'still', 'already' and 'not', sentence adverbs such as 'unfortunately', 'clearly' and 'probably', conjunctions like 'and', 'although' and 'unless', interrogatives such as 'what', 'which', 'how' and 'why', and even interjections like 'Alas!', 'Hooray!' and 'Damn!', are all readily accommodated by the general scheme. Linguistic

[1]Bartsch (1979) also promotes notions of 'correctness' as fundamental to understanding meaning; however, his proposals involve distinguishing two sorts of correctness, embodying a pragmatic-semantic distinction (which, along with Dummett, I do not favour), an unfavourable consequence of which is that nothing can be made of the representational aspect of different linguistic acts.

form signals the acts of assertion, question and injunction, in virtue of a definitive connection to speakers' attitudes–specifically, to either belief or desire–toward what the words specify.

In *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein notoriously opposes (or so it seems) any general characterization of what it is for a word to have a meaning, relishing instead in a supposedly vast diversity of functions and multiplicity of kinds of words (cf.1958b, §§11-15, §23). Somewhat surprisingly, Dummett at one place embraces Wittgenstein's exhortation against the possibility of giving such a characterization:

> A sophisticated answer [to the query 'What is meaning?'] is one that respects . . . Wittgenstein's principle of the diversity of the functions of words: there can be no uniform answer to the question, 'What is it for a word to mean something?'.
>
> (1987c: 255)

This concession looks strikingly at odds with everything he says elsewhere about the meaning of a word being a matter of its involvement in determining sentential truth-conditions. There is little to quibble with in the view that conjunctions, nouns, verbs and demonstratives function differently; but diversity at one level does not preclude uniformity at another. It is far from clear that Wittgenstein wishes entirely to rule out general formulae: he apparently allows the form '*w* signifies . . .' in *descriptions* of *w*'s use, at least where the application of this predicate is not in doubt for other words (1958b: §10). In any case, talk of different *functions* and different *kinds* of words should not mislead us to imagine a plurality of kinds of linguistic *meaning* (a mistake which Lyons commits, 1977: 4-5). Any differences which we should expect to find among explanations such as '*window* means . . .', '*blue* means . . .', '*although*

means . . .', '*these* means . . .', and so on, relate to differences in complementation; there is no sense in assigning any variability to the verb.

The component words and linguistic forms owe their *particular* meanings, then, to the contributions which they make to the meaning of sentences in which they occur; i.e., to precisely those conditions which an utterance represents, whether explicitly or inexplicitly, as obtaining. It is not that this can never be construed in terms of truth-conditions; rather, it cannot *always* be so construed. I shall try to spell these claims out more fully in this section, and examine whether, and to what extent, the general formulation gives an improved account of the various expressions and forms discussed earlier.

But first, my claim that conceptual analysis of meaning must make central use of some notion of correctness (or appropriateness) rather than one of truth is one which Dummett anticipates, and explicitly rejects.

> The claims in question are to the existence of a basic distinction between *asserting* something and merely *suggesting* (or, in a special sense, 'implying') it: if what is merely suggested by a statement does not hold, the statement will not be *false*, but only *inappropriate*. It is difficult a priori to see how there could be a place for such a distinction: how can there be two different ways in which a statement may be factually incorrect, or two different ways of conveying by means of a sentence that something is the case?
> (1981a: 86. Dummett does not cite anyone as having actually proposed this.)

Dummett dismisses the idea that improper use of the conjunction 'but' renders an utterance inappropriate (rather than false) in any way which can be generalized. Characterizing 'but' as "a very special kind of example of tone", Dummett resolves the issue by saying that it hints, *in an indefinite but contextually relevant way*, at a contrast about which nothing more, in general, can be said. It is this indefiniteness, along with the vague notion of relevance,

which prompts the suggestion of a distinction between asserting and suggesting; but no definite condition can be assigned to a sentence as a condition of appropriateness, rather than of truth.

Against this, however, our examination of tone reveals that the difference between 'and' and 'but' is not rightly classified as tonal: neither the idea of a manner of speaking nor the special variety of expressives is applicable. Even where 'and' conjoins sentences, it cannot always be replaced by 'but': the sense of * 'Andrew went shopping, but Alison went shopping' is suspect.

Secondly, any indefiniteness which attaches to 'but' does not undermine a basic distinction between appropriateness and truth. An unspecified contrast may be just as much a part of a word's sense as any indefinite condition associated with some other expression–conjunction, adjective, verb, noun, whatever. Tonal differences within the class of sentence connectives *might* be sought with some initial plausibility, perhaps, among pairs with *similar* functions: say, contrastive conjunctions, or concessive ones. Potential candidates might be, e.g., 'but'-'however', 'though'-'although', or 'despite'-'notwithstanding'. Even so, with the possible exception of the more formal 'notwithstanding', this is not a tack on which I would pin much hope: the archaic 'howbeit' gives us a better example of tonality within this domain.

True, imprecise words like 'big' or 'heap' can generate familiar paradoxes without severing a connection to truth. With respect to conjunctions–or, more generally, adverbial conjuncts and disjuncts–it is not any indefiniteness of sense which suggests the inappositeness of truth, but the nature of their function in virtue of which they do not fall squarely within the

scope of assertion. With the use of 'but, for example, one does not actually *state* that some contrast obtains; rather, one *represents* this as being the case. Frege's distinguishing 'hinting' from asserting is not entirely amiss; but to repeat, understanding such terms involves no guesswork. In any event, little indefiniteness attaches to the use of similar terms, e.g., 'despite' and 'unless', whose associated conditions are drawn considerably more narrowly (cf. Rundle's observation on 'even though', 1979: 393-394). Likewise with adverbial disjuncts, e.g., 'frankly' and 'surprisingly'.

Before returning to his claims above, it must be acknowledged that Dummett himself assigns a role to correctness, a primitive and more basic notion from which the concept of truth is said to originate (this idea is restated in many places, cf. 1976: 83-88; 1978: 21-22; 1981a: 347; 1991: 165-168). For Dummett, the concept of a correct assertion–i.e., of 'assertibility-conditions'–has greater entitlement to the central place within the theory of meaning which Frege, Davidson, and others accord to truth, realistically construed. Since assertibility thus stands against truth within the same general theoretical framework (of sentence-radicals and force-indicators), my earlier criticisms of this approach remain unaffected. It must be recognized that although Dummett's concept of a correct assertion purports to give the *sense* of a sentence, this idea of correctness looks to be directly attached to the *act* of asserting, or more generally, to the realm of utterance force: we understand the content of a thought just in case we know the conditions in which that thought is correctly *asserted* (Dummett explicitly remarks at 1991: 165 that analysis of the concept of correctness falls to the theory of force).

But *what* thought? And what is it to *correctly* assert something? Well, we justifiably utter 'I- A' just in case there is sufficient evidence that 'A' represents things as they are. But I repeat: the utterance itself is correct if and only if things are as it makes them out to be. There is a difference. I am not concerned here with the idea of sufficient evidence, but with what an *un*asserted thought represents as being the case. According to Dummett, the content of a thought is determined by what counts as evidence for or against *it*; but, one may still insist: what is the evidence evidence *for*? Note, too, that this cannot be merely *inductive* evidence, because such conditions are also evidence for innumerable other truths. On the face of it, the claim that a set of conditions, $e_1, \ldots, e_n$, is evidence for *p* presupposes independent knowledge of what thought *p* is, an independent understanding of what the expression *means*–unless, of course, this claim is to be taken as *stipulating* the meaning. The assertibilist dictum might be interpreted more charitably and more palatably if evidential conditions are understood to 'determine' content only in the sense of providing the means by which a correct understanding of *p* is arrived at. Either way, there is no call to read these conditions into the definition itself. The suggestion that *p* is determined by what counts as evidence for it, or alternatively, that what the expression means is determined by the grounds for uttering it assertorically, is a long way from saying that *p means*, or is equivalent to, 'There is sufficient evidence for *p*', or, intuitionistically, 'There is a means of constructing a proof that *p*'.

Before elaborating on this, I offer some brief comments on what has so far been said. The claim that the grounds for (assertorically) uttering *p* give the

content of *p* leaves unexplained the idea of the force with which it may be uttered. Typically, we attend to observable features of mood, word order and intonation to tell us *when* an assertion has been made, a question asked, an action enjoined, etc., but as yet this tells us nothing about the conditions governing the correct use of these devices, and nothing about any possible representational character. Secondly, on Dummett's analysis it appears that the notion of sense loses it favoured place within the theory of meaning to that of force: the content of a sentence can be given by, and explained in terms of, grounds for asserting it only if we assume a prior familiarity with assertion. In fact, the whole distinction between sense and force comes under threat. What *are* assertions? Well, what does 'assertion' mean? Explaining the meaning of 'assert' by appeal to *assertibility* appears unacceptably circular. The metalinguistic sign of assertion is no better off: by stipulation, 'I-' is devoid of sense, and merely *indicates* that what follows is asserted. It itself is not asserted, and so *assertibility*-conditions get no grip.

Returning to Dummett's claim above, suppose, having witnessed a bloodied cyclist being loaded into an ambulance–the battered bicycle, dented car and anxious driver also being present–one informs a passerby, "A cyclist has been injured." Given the evidence, no charge of impropriety can be levelled against this statement. But it would be absurd to think that it literally means anything like an explicit statement of the evidence for the cyclist's being injured. If, on the other hand, Dummett's maxim is to be given a perfectly general reading, such that the original statement amounts to "I am in a position to assert that a bicyclist has been injured", we must query which component of

the original statement contributes that which is signified by the additional words of the paraphrase.

It might be supposed that with a sentence like 'Jones is brave' the locus of assertibility is the copula. Conceivably, Dummett might press for an analogy between 'is' and epistemic 'must', considering the ostensibly evidential character of the latter. Taken broadly, 'must' is associated with a sort of 'negative' condition: all conceivable possibilities but one are understood to be evidentially ruled out. Similarly, one might portray 'is' as appropriate just in case no evidence for a particular claim is lacking. Recall that 'must', like 'may', cancels assertoric force. 'They must be home' does not go so far as to say they *are* home; the evidence in hand is insufficient for making the full-bodied assertion. One might suppose, therefore, that association with the same set of evidential conditions underlies both cases, that their differences correspond solely to the relative strength of evidence. Furthermore, the apparent kinship between mood and 'modality', plus the fact that both the copula and 'must' possess auxiliary status, might also be supposed to lend credence to this view.

For all their similarities, real or apparent, the proposed symmetry breaks down. Modals like 'must', 'may' and 'will' are sufficiently syntactically and grammatically unlike 'is' to undermine the latter's assimilation to this category. First, notice that if Dummett's construal of modals as force-indicators were correct, on the proposed analogy assertibility-conditions for 'is' would also have to be interpreted thus. However, we have already seen why epistemic modals cannot be read as force-indicators. Still, important differences are reflected by the different grammars of 'is' and 'must'. Like all modal auxiliaries, 'must' is

tenseless, and possesses no progressive, infinitive or participle form, all of which are possible with the auxiliary 'be'. More importantly, perhaps, its so-called 'modality' is not to be identified with verbal mood: indicative, imperative or subjunctive–a confusion which generates considerable distortion in the classification of linguistic acts. In any case, its more-or-less explicit connection to evidence licenses no assertibilist reading: 'I am in a position to assert they *must* be home' meets with the same reproval as 'I am in a position to assert they *are* home'.

The supposition that assertibility inheres in the copula will not do, for the obvious reason that not all sentences contain copulas: we still do not know what sentential component imparts assertibility to 'Elvis lives'. Plainly, the structured thought 'I am in a position to assert . . .' cannot correspond to *any* of the original component *words*, taken individually or as a whole, for the simple reason that according to our general interpretation *every* sentence is to be read in this way.

Three further points before moving on: first, if the sense of 'There's a fly in your soup' were really 'I can justifiably assert there's a fly in your soup', then the conditional 'If there's a fly in your soup, I can justifiably assert there's a fly in your soup', which is not invariably true (there might be a fly in your soup without *my* knowing it),[2] would be equivalent to the plainly tautologous conditional in which assertibility featured in both antecedent and consequent. Similarly, if the content were understood in terms of proof, the true (but non-tautologous) conditional 'If there is a constructed proof that Fermat's Last Theorem is correct,

[2]It is important to realize that the impersonal 'It is assertible that . . .' is also unacceptable: for an individual speaker to be justified in making an assertion it is not sufficient that someone *else* be in a position to assert it.

then Fermat's Last Theorem is correct' would be equivalent to a tautologous conditional in which both antecedent and consequent contained the reference to proof.[3] However, neither pair contains equivalent sentences. Intuitionists may contend that this simply betrays a systematic misunderstanding of the language. I counter that intuitionism disregards what is conspicuous: the different individual words, associated as they must be *on any theory* with distinct sets of conditions, bear different meanings.

Secondly, imperatives, by parity of reasoning, would have to be read as *Make it the case -that I am in a position to assert . . .*, and would be complied with just in case the hearer brings it about that there is sufficient evidence for the speaker to make the specified assertion, even though the action explicitly enjoined by the imperative remained unfulfilled.

Thirdly, if assertibility-conditions are constitutive of thoughts they must fall within the scope of assertoric force: 'I- (I am in a position to assert that *p*)'. In which case they are also subject to negation: if the speaker is not in a position to assert that *p*, then 'I- *p*' is *false*. This means that if *p* is equivalent to ' *p* is assertible', the contradictory *not-p* ('it is not the case that *p*') must be equivalent to '*p* is not assertible', not to '*not-p* is assertible'. If this is right, Dummett's attack on the law of excluded middle fails. For 'I- (A or not-A)' should be read as 'A is assertible or A is not assertible', which is invariably true: indeterminateness does not extend to the question of assertibility. What *is* objectionable is for an utterance to be ruled *false* solely on the basis of groundlessness. As we shall

[3]Prawitz, who, like Dummett, advocates a verificationist explanation of sentential content, nevertheless also says that construing conditions for warranted assertibility as part of a sentence's content results in a distortion of meaning of conditional sentences in which it occurs as the antecedent–to such an extent that this may lead us to misrepresent a false conditional as true (1987: 137).

see, even Dummett allows that such utterances may yet be true.

If a semantically definitive connection to evidence is sought in predicates, indicative mood emerges as the most promising candidate. After all, the similarity of modality to mood helped prompt the analogy in the first place. But mood, as we have seen, contributes, not to the senses of sentences, but–along with word-order and intonation–to the force with which they are uttered. Strictly speaking, then, it is incorrect to represent Fregean thoughts as possessing declarative form; this is something of which the radical ought to be stripped.[4]

Despite whatever plausibility a move to utterance-force holds, it is unclear whether we can read assertibility into the *meaning* of assertoric form. Dummett glosses the concept of assertion in terms of a speaker's intention to utter a true statement (1981a: especially 354-356). But, to repeat, an assertion is made by uttering a particular form of words, whether or not the speaker has sufficient grounds for using this form, and whether or not he does this with the aim to make a true statement, as the possibility of lying makes clear. Moreover, Dummett's adversion to the intentionality of assertion makes it look as if just any truth will do–as if I only need go round telling others my name. Over and above this, Dummett frequently stresses the need to spell out the putative (socio-linguistic) conventions with which the practice of making of assertions is bound up. But while these may form an indispensable part of a general description of language, *per se*, are such conditions to be read into an utterance's meaning?

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[4]Therefore, thoughts are to be rendered by nominal phrases like 'the cat's being away', or 'that the mice will play'. This necessitates stipulating the metalinguistic application of the predicate 'is true' and the force-indicators 'it is the case that', etc. It also results in an unnatural rendering of conditionals: 'If the cat's being away, then the mice's playing'. If this counts against the sentence-radical form of analysis, then so much the better for the approach I am advocating.

Intuitively, this confuses what goes into an understanding of the *practice of making* assertions, injunctions and questions with the conditions associated with the *meaning* which declarative, imperative and interrogative forms contribute to particular utterances thus made.

Dummett, unlike Frege, allows that ordinarily utterances are informative in a number of ways. He says that from a theoretical standpoint

> . . . what is conveyed by an assertoric utterance–beyond the bare fact that the speaker made that assertion at that time–is multiple: that the statement is true; that the speaker thought he had grounds for it; and that he thought there was a point in saying it.
>
> (1991: 167)

The question is: which ones are semantically tied to such forms? Thus far this notion of correctness has been left undifferentiated. It can now usefully be subdivided. As Dummett observes,

> We differentiate between diverse ways in which such an [assertoric] utterance may be at fault: it may be false, even though well-grounded; or groundless, even if true; or pointless, even if true and well-grounded.
>
> (1991: 167)

To these we may add at least one more: inappropriate use of a tonal expression like 'sweat'. Additionally, utterances may be criticized for being impolite, in bad taste, or a breach of confidence; but Dummett is surely right to regard such criticisms as extraneous to an assessment of linguistic correctness, seeing that they are directed against the *saying* of what is said, not against the content (cf. 1976: 83-84). In such cases, the notion of something's being a sign *of* something else comes to the fore, and it requires little effort to see that the same holds for criticisms relating to both tone and point.

The crucial issue concerns the relation of the grounds for making an

utterance to the notion of linguistic correctness, understood in terms of representationality. Dummett's claim is that criticisms levelled at insufficiently grounded assertions impinge on *what* is said, rather than on the *saying* of it. A couple of things stand in the way of this. First, Dummett's observation that incorrectly grounded assertions may by this very fact have to be withdrawn does not show they are literally incomprehensible. Just the opposite: the demand for the withdrawal of such assertions itself rests on a prior understanding of their meaning. For how else can a hearer know there is inadequate evidence for *that* assertion? In issuing a statement on insufficient grounds, it is not as if no assertion has been made. The chess analogy may be useful here. The comparison is not to an illegitimate chess move–moving the knight one square forward, say–which is no *possible* move. Rather, it is akin to a move which is ill-founded, given the position of the remaining pieces, and especially, the aim to win. Such a move is a *bad* move, and ought therefore to be redressed. Analogously, given the aim to make true statements, a completely groundless assertion stands comparatively little chance of success. It can therefore be faulted on that score; but, for all that, what shows that an intelligible assertion has been made is the way in which it may afterwards be treated. If things turn out to be as the speaker made them out to be, then we rightly characterize him as having said something correct, even though we can legitimately claim that he *spoke* improperly.

This is related to the second point, concerning Moore's paradox. I confess that in this case things are less clear: an assertion coupled with a declaration by the speaker that he lacks grounds for making that assertion is

undeniably perplexing. Some might wish to attribute this to the speaker's departure from the standard convention associated with the reasons or motives behind the making of assertions–that the obtaining of such conditions is only inductively inferable from the fact that a speaker has made an assertion. This suits its depiction as a natural sign *of* the presence of these conditions. Assertibility-conditions, then, would fall into the large and heterogenous class of pragmatic implicatures. The description of such aspects of the correct use of language is no doubt a highly complex matter; but whether or not it can be accomplished with any degree of systematicity, such an account can only describe the conditions under which may legitimately be used the various expressions independently understood.

Whether Dummett's assertibility-conditions are to be reckoned a matter of force or of implication, a perfectly parallel situation exists with questions and injunctions. The usual grounds for asking questions–for conveying the desire for a particular form of response–relate to a speaker's desire for knowledge and the belief in his hearer's ability to satisfy this desire. Dummett is right about these not belonging to the meaning of questions. Similarly with injunctions. The usual grounds for issuing injunctions are complex, involving such factors as the relative status of speaker and hearer, along with the speaker's belief that certain desired conditions do not obtain, but can be made to obtain by the hearer. But inappropriate as it may be for a young child to issue an order to its parents, or for anyone to enjoin an action already effected or otherwise impossible to fulfill, it is not *what* they say which is perplexing, unintelligible, or incorrect, but their *saying* it.

That a speaker makes an assertion on a particular occasion issues no guarantee that he has adequate grounds for so speaking. It may be salutary to recall here that the poles of right and wrong, correct and incorrect, are the ones properly invoked in judging such acts as answers, guesses, suppositions, assumptions, predictions and more. So, 'His prediction was wrong', 'it wasn't to be'; 'Our assumption was mistaken, it wasn't so'; 'Your answer to this question is incorrect'. And so on. Moreover, if meaning and understanding are as closely related as Dummett has suggested, notice that we *understand* correctly or incorrectly, rightly or wrongly, but not truly or falsely. Dummett acknowledges that not all acceptable assertoric utterances are made on the basis of adequate grounds. But according to him, hunches, prophecies, expressions of faith, and the many acts like those above, constitute peripheral and atypical uses of declarative form (1991: 172). However, these speech-acts are not varieties of assertion in the way that, e.g., statements may be so construed; and so the fact that we may reliably (partially) identify them on the basis of their groundlessness betrays no departure from the general pattern characteristic of declarative form. It is to be regarded as a point in favour of the analysis in terms of correctness that it thus draws them together within the same general pattern, rather than consigning them to some special, subordinate class.

Dummett's suggestion, in the initial passage above, that assertions can be incorrect in no other way than by being false, is clearly mistaken; though not all conditions which make for incorrectness find their way into an account of meaning. The conditions for the *in*correctness of an utterance, in the relevant sense, relate, in the most basic instance, to things not being as an utterance

represents them to be. An utterance is incorrect just in case it *mis*informs. The distinction between 'suggesting' and asserting is sustained. Though suited to different needs and different contexts, both satisfy the basic representational requirement of linguistic intercourse. Assertion is naturally associated with explicitness; i.e., it governs those sentential components which are subject to negatability. The possibility of negatability, or more generally, adverbial modification, in turn reveals the narrower range of applicability of truth and falsity.

Above, I asked what the content or meaning of *p* is, in general, as distinct from that of 'I- *p*'. Turning the question around, what more is there to the latter? What does the sign for force signify? Although not all conditions associated with the making of assertions contribute to the significance of declarative form, I have claimed that this form can be accommodated by the general formula of 'making out to be'. This might invite the suggestion that use of this form 'makes out' that the speaker is asserting something. A more accurate characterization portrays use of declarative form as *constituting*, in favoured circumstances, the making of an assertion. Essentially, we have performance, but without a performative. Yet this form is representational in the requisite way: it represents the speaker as having a certain belief, one specified by the content of the words uttered. This is supported by Moore's paradox: the incompatibility of conjoining an assertion that *p* with the assertion "I don't believe that *p*". But it does more. Declarative form not only represents how things stand with respect to the speaker, it purports to represent how things stand with respect to the subject matter signified by the component words. This account of the significance of

declarative form can be extended to all those cases, involving the construction of various kinds of clauses within complex sentences, which, as Dummett concedes, may logically be asserted, but which cannot be represented as attached to an assertion sign governing an entire sentence (1981b: 493). Although in such cases it is incorrect to read the clausal content as being in a strict sense asserted, nevertheless, except where accompanied by a modifier signalling the cancellation of assertoric force (e.g., 'if' or 'or'), use of declarative form is to be understood as conveying (inexplicitly) both that things are as the clause represents them to be, and that the speaker *believes* this to be so.

In some places Dummett allows that assertions express speakers' beliefs in the sense in which this partly constitutes the meaning of this form; but elsewhere he appears to reject this view. In 'Assertion' he seems to say both. In any case, he expressly denies the appropriateness of an analogous characterization for questions and injunctions. Dividing linguistic acts roughly into more and less formal varieties according to whether they possess or lack definite consequences, Dummett says,

> Those [linguistic acts] of the less formalized variety can usually be correctly described as the expression of some mental attitude–e.g. assertion is rightly called an expression of belief, and the correctness of such a characterization is not impugned by the occurrence of insincere expressions. This is shown by Moore's paradox . . . . Requests may likewise be said to express a desire for what is requested, since one likewise frustrates a request by adding that one does not want what one has asked for. We have noted, on the other hand, that the giving of a command is not, in general, frustrated by expressing a hope that the command be disobeyed; and the view that the asking of a question was the expression of a desire to know the truth on some matter would entail that examination questions, and many questions asked in the law courts, in the process of teaching, and in quite ordinary discourse, were not questions in the straightforward sense. . . . We held, indeed, that the right approach to an account of even the unformalized linguistic acts was not through attempting any analysis, independent of language, of the mental attitudes expressed by the corresponding utterances, but, rather, by a study of the conventions governing those utterances . . . but that does not destroy the distinction

> between utterances which can, and those which cannot, be said to express inner attitudes.
>
> (1981a: 302)

Earlier in the same essay, though, Dummett appears to deny such informativeness even to the putatively less formalized act of assertion:

> We have a natural tendency to think of these various linguistic acts–making an assertion, . . . as the external expressions of an interior act of adopting a particular mental attitude. . . . The analysis of these interior acts and events is a matter of epistemology, not of logic; but the *linguistic* acts should be classified as conventional actions, not as the external expression of interior states. Assertion, for example, is to be explained in terms of the conventions governing the use of those sentences which are understood as having assertoric force, not as the utterance of a sentence with the intention of expressing one's interior act of judgment (or interior state of belief) that it is true.
>
> (1981a: 311)

This last passage is perhaps best understood as criticizing the idea of language being an external expression (of an inner state) analogous to crying's being an external expression of pain–something which Dummett is right to oppose. Possibly, then, there is no contradiction with what he says later. What matters is that such interior acts or mental attitudes are attributable, and are redescribable, only on the basis of a subject's linguistic competence. There is no need to deny a semantically definitive association between linguistic acts and attitudes so long as the explanatory priority lies on the side of the former. With respect to assertions and requests, the later passage (the first of the above two) is more clearly correct. Where Dummett goes wrong is in denying the applicability of this account to questions and injunctions.

To the question "Why do you say (assert) that?", the reply "Because I believe it" is no answer, or is only a facetious one at best. But a reply of "Because I have good evidence for it", or even "Because I have good reason to

believe it" is neither facetious nor trivial: evidence contributes to the speaker's reason for believing, and thus gives a *point* to his utterance. Earlier I suggested that assertibility might not belong to the semantic conditions associated with the meaning of declarative form, but noted that the explicit acknowledgment of absence of evidence does seem to generate a contradiction along the lines of Moore's paradox. With questions and injunctions the situation is symmetrical. A trivial and facetious answer to the question "Why do you ask that?" would be "Because I desire a reply as to whether [how, when, etc.] such-and-such". Asked without special stress, the question can be taken as meaning "What is your *reason* for asking that?", i.e., "What is your reason for *wanting* an answer to that?"–a question which explicitly acknowledges the desire conveyed by the original question. Likewise with the reply "Because I want you to do it" offered in response to the question "Why do you tell me to do that?", normally paraphrasable as "What reason do you have for wanting me to do that?".

Issuing an injunction immediately followed by an avowal *that the relevant desire is lacking* does indeed frustrate the injunction: use of imperative form where desire is absent constitutes a case of insincerity on the speaker's part perfectly analogous to that embodied in the use of declarative form with the intention to deceive. It is not that no injunction has been effected; it is indeed possible, as Dummett says, to issue an injunction with the (secret) hope that it be disobeyed. It is just that under such circumstances a speaker voices an incorrect utterance, for things are not as he represents them to be.

So, too, with questions. The error in Dummett's characterization of interrogative form lies in his construing the speaker's attitude as a desire *to*

know the truth, when all that is needed, indeed all that is conveyed by the correct use of this form, is a desire *for a reply*. Examiners' and barristers' questions fall into line, and rhetorical questions constitute no counterexample to this analysis: additional signals convey the belief that the answer is so obvious as to require no reply–though one is still invited.

Rather than distinguish varieties of force according to whether they do, or do not, convey speakers' attitudes–a scheme which results in an unnatural grouping of linguistic acts[5]–we simplify matters by recognizing this general association as characteristic of all sentence-types. Differences in meaning, then, are explicable in terms of the different attitudes thus represented as obtaining by the use of the corresponding forms. This does not result, as Dummett seems to fear, in an unwanted mentalistic explanation of force, according to which we should be compelled to proceed via a prior analysis of mental attitudes conceived as independent of the linguistic acts with which they are associated.

Note, too, that the general formula applies both to 'sentential' (yes-no) questions and to *wh*- questions, forms which under any acceptably systematic semantics must be represented as variations on the basic interrogative theme. Their differences derive, not from linguistic form, but from the specific content of their words, which delineates the particular form of reply desired. In addition, the embedded 'assumption' of *wh*- questions finds a place within the general formulation: interrogative pronouns and adverbs are correctly used if and only if

[5]On Dummett's characterization, requests are grouped with assertions, and distinguished from questions and injunctions, which they more closely resemble. Questions may be regarded as requests for a linguistic action (a reply), while injunctions, like requests, generally call for a non-linguistic response.

the speaker *correctly* believes that somebody did something at some time, at some place, for some reason, by some means, etc. The contradictory nature of "No one knocked on the door; but who knocked on the door?", indicates that both sets of conditions are associated with the meaning of the question "Who knocked on the door?"

It is perilously easy to mistake the innocuous sounding 'making things out to be a certain way' as simply colloquial for 'asserting something true'. To repeat, this would be wrong on both counts: 'making out to be' or 'representing' cannot be reduced either to asserting, or to any particular variety of force; it is confined neither to the realm of force nor to word-meaning. Equally important, the notion of 'things being a certain way' is not reducible to 'true'. Things are a certain way just in case the conjunctions 'unless' and 'however' are correctly used, and things are a certain way just in case the sentence adverbs 'confidentially' and 'hopefully' are correctly used; yet in neither case is there any call for truth to play a central role.

Dummett allows that if we conventionally employed different modes for greeting married and unmarried women we could say that each mode expressed the speaker's belief as to the marital status of the woman addressed, without constituting an assertion to that effect (1981a: 354; surprisingly, he does not resort to the category of tone here, a move which might have been thought to hold some initial plausibility). Apparently, then, such a practice *would* support the distinction between two ways of conveying information, or representing things to be, and would thus exemplify a way in which an utterance could be 'factually incorrect' without thereby being false. This is

difficult to reconcile with his claim that it is hard to see how there *could* be room for such a distinction: surely he cannot mean that no such forms of greeting are possible. That Dummett so readily dismisses the need for this distinction evidently means that for him no such cases exist, that there simply is no place in the language as it is. The examples canvassed thus far demonstrate otherwise. Inexplicit informativeness is not something which we *might* make room for in English: it is already a quite common and basic feature of the language as we find it.

As it happens, English contains different 'forms of address' for men and women, and for distinguishing married from unmarried women. Although it might be tempting to characterize their use as constituting a formal manner of speaking–'Miss Suzie Cue' rather than 'Suzie Cue', say–it is impossible, invoking only the notion of tone, to characterize the distinct conditions governing 'Mrs.' and 'Miss', or especially, 'Mr.' and 'Mrs'. Use of one or the other is correct just in case the associated condition obtains; but no assertion to that effect is actually framed. Exactly the same holds with the use of other titles like 'Dr.', 'Professor', 'Chairman' and the like.

Recall Dummett's admission that the sentence-radical model does not apply to interjections. He observes, however, that although it cannot occur as a constituent of a complex sentence, an utterance of "Ow!", which he calls "an expression of pain", can be used to deceive (1981a: 356-357). The first criterion reveals that an interjection is not an assertion, something which can hardly have been in doubt; but, what is important to note is that if such an utterance can be used to deceive, it can also be used to inform, i.e., to represent

something as being the case. As it happens, this particular vocable behaves more like a natural sign *of* pain, or, at best simply mimics such an 'expression'. Consequently, its informative character is better explained by appeal to natural meaning, which accords with our natural reluctance to acknowledge 'ow' as a genuine English word. Many other interjections follow this pattern, e.g., 'argh', 'ah', 'oh', 'aha', 'er', 'um', 'hmm' and such; yet sufficiently many genuinely meaningful interjections exist for which the distinction between asserting and suggesting is perfectly apt.

Thus, 'Surprise!', 'Hooray!', 'Alas!', 'Damn!'. An utterance of "Hooray!", for instance, represents the speaker as feeling jubilant, and is correct if and only if he possesses this attitude or feeling. It may be worth noticing that reading from right to left, the formula does not require or entail that this is the only utterance which can be used to represent things as being this way. For instance, this attitude can be expressed as the object of a straightforward assertion: "I feel jubilant". It must be stressed, however, that the two utterances are not synonymous. Their associated conditions are obviously closely related, but not identical. The declarative form contributes something to the meaning of the latter which the former lacks: it conveys the speaker's belief in what he says. Moreover, the precise wording of the explicit form contributes in a distinct way to the meaning of the whole utterance, making for a composed structure capable of undergoing modifications for which the inexplicit form is unsuited.

This also helps explain the difference in meaning between 'Wittgenstein was a behaviourist?' and 'Was Wittgenstein a behaviourist?'. The former question, exploiting declarative word order, is correct if and only if there is a

supposition (either on the part of the speaker or the hearer) that Wittgenstein was a behaviourist, and the speaker desires confirmation of this belief–signalled by the rising intonation contour. The negatively oriented 'Wasn't Wittgenstein a behaviourist?' is correct if and only if a speaker believes that Wittgenstein was a behaviourist and desires a reply as to the correctness of his belief–a desire expressed by an invitation to the hearer to contradict it. Various possibilities for combining elements exist: consider the exclamation 'Is he brave!', which combines a falling intonation contour with interrogative word order. The falling intonation of the exclamation imparts a quasi-assertive character, signalling belief; the word order conveys an invitation for a reply.

Similarly, the significance of linguistic form emerges with sentence adverbs. "Surprisingly, Jones was brave" is correct just in case Jones was brave, the speaker believes Jones was brave, and the speaker feels surprised by Jones' having been brave. The same holds for certain predicative forms as well; but we have already seen that the two forms cannot be equated in every respect. One form allows for certain kinds of further elaborations; it is presumptuous to suppose that in no circumstances will the difference in form get exploited. Compare the difference between 'probably' and 'it is probable', where in some circumstances a difference in correctness and incorrectness emerges (cf. Rundle, 1979: 395-396).

I have proposed that a word is correctly used if and only if it is the standard word for some thing or condition. An assertion is correct only if the individual words' respective associated conditions obtain. Rundle, however, suggests that the defining condition may require only a speaker's *belief* that the

associated condition obtains (1979: 396-397). For example, he holds that use of a conjunction is correct just in case a speaker attempts to mark a condition of the relevant kind; by stipulation it is inappropriate just in case he misapprehends the relation between what the different clauses represent. With words like 'window' and 'open', univocity requires that their respective associated conditions remain constant over assertive, interrogative and imperative occurrences. Nothing in the bare occurrence of either word bears an association with the speaker's *belief* that the conditions obtain; the assertoric force of "The window is open" is responsible for conveying this. Plainly, their use in questions and injunctions cannot be said to correspond to a belief that their associated conditions obtain.

Rundle's supposition might be felt to secure a foothold with forms of expression which are only inexplicitly conveyed or 'suggested', i.e., with 'quasi-assertive' word-types which may connect up with either assertoric or non-assertoric clauses. In light of our assessment of sentence adverbs, this does not look immediately promising. But perhaps conjunctions display some distinctive relation to belief. There are two sorts of case to consider. In the first, we suppose a speaker correctly believes there to be some contrast, say, between what two sentential clauses represent, which he wishes to convey, albeit inexplicitly, to his audience. For this he uses the word 'moreover': "The Duchess is wealthy; moreover, she lives modestly." His belief is correct, and his intention to use a word which represents this condition as obtaining is also correct. But for all that, quite obviously, he has used the wrong word–'but', 'however', 'although' or 'even so' being more suitable to his belief. According to

Rundle's view, 'moreover' is used incorrectly in such a case. I agree. With the second kind, we imagine that a speaker uses the right word for that relation which he wrongly supposes holds. So he says, "The rabbi is orthodox, although he eats only kosher food." Here the problem is not *ex hypothesi* with a misunderstanding of the conjunction, but with a misapprehension of the connection between Jewish orthodoxy and eating habits. Rundle's view entails that this use of 'although' is correct; but since the relevant condition does not in fact obtain, it is inappropriate. Naturally, the *utterance* is incorrect: despite the assumption that the speaker correctly understands the meaning of 'although', he represents things as being other than they are.

In this sense of 'correct', we could say that a speaker correctly uses a word when he exploits its standard meaning for the purpose of lying. In the above example, despite his misapprehension, the speaker represents the rabbi as being orthodox and as eating only kosher food; he further makes out that these two characteristics have a certain relationship. The latter, of course, is wrong. It does not help matters, indeed it is quite irrelevant, that the speaker rightly believes the relation signified by 'although' to hold between some *other* conditions. Use of this conjunction makes it out that a certain condition obtains, and not merely that it is believed to obtain. We might concede that correct use of conjunctions involves the belief that their associated conditions obtain; and this could be true of their use in connecting non-assertoric clauses. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to hold that this is all they convey. It is indeed possible to distinguish between a form of incorrectness and inappropriateness in the way Rundle imagines; but the distinction is entirely

spurious. It does nothing to show that the condition to which a conjunction is semantically associated is definable merely in terms of a speaker's belief that the relevant condition obtains.

Finally, the formula in terms of representationality helps clear up some of our earlier worries about varieties of tone. Now it is easy to see why some, but not all, tonal features are to be reckoned a matter of meaning. In fact, the broadening of sense, or word meaning, will accommodate those varieties which, following Dummett, I called 'expressive': pejoratives like 'Chink' and 'nigger' are representational in the relevant way, as are honorifics and forms of address. Insofar as any of these *also* embodies a style of speaking, it is, in addition, tonal. But this is something further to meaning. In general, then, tone gets relegated to a role outside the scope of explanations of meaning, and placed within the larger domain of social conventions associated with such things as politeness, formality, technicality, and the like.

3.3 Conclusion: grammar and analysis

Now, it might be felt that the restriction of the true-false poles to clausal negation still allows for such stalwarts as no-frills subject-predicate sentences to be construed as unproblematically truth-conditional–a class which on any view constitutes an enormous chunk of language. But even this is not invariably so. As Dummett observes, negation in English is standardly effected by negating predicates, the logical *sentence*-operator '¬' not being meant to precisely conform to the structure of English sentences in which 'not' occurs (cf. 1978: 27-28, and 1981a: 421, 424). Truth and falsity are thus tied to the predicate (main

verb and complement). Likewise, as the scope of assertion is determined by the application of truth and falsity, here again we naturally fasten upon the predicate.

This means that not all components of even simple subject-predicate declarative sentences occur assertively. There is a parallel between the non-assertive character of conjunctions, say, and subject terms. 'The expensive Cadillac belongs to Burt' is true (hence correct) just in case the vehicle is an expensive Cadillac which belongs to Burt, and false (hence incorrect) just in case the vehicle is an expensive Cadillac which does not belong to Burt. But this sentence presents neither the costliness nor the make of the car in a way which may be straightforwardly negated: neither is, strictly speaking, asserted. The sentence is not false if it turns out that the car is either not expensive or not a Cadillac, but we have another form of incorrectness. No new logical relation of presupposition is required, however: the idea of representationality accommodates the distinction between asserting and suggesting. Neither is there any special problem with truth-valuelessness; cf. the truth-valueless 'Hopefully, Susie completed her essay'. Such sentences are correct or not depending on whether the conditions with which they are associated obtain.

Predicates, being the focus of truth and falsity, may be immune to such forms of incorrectness. In the last section I showed that lexical axioms must somehow specify the range of a word's application. I also showed why it is that this cannot always be done in a wholly truth-conditional manner. Dummett refers to this aspect of a word's meaning in his example of the verb 'to scowl':

> It needs reflection to notice that the explanations we give others of the meanings of words usually exploit grammatical clues to indicate the part of

> speech to which the words belong, and thereby the role they will have in sentences. Thus verbs are usually explained by using an infinitive or a gerund; 'To scowl is to make a face like this' indicates that scowl is an intransitive verb (and moreover that *its subject must be a person or creature with a face*). [my italics]
>
> (1991: 100-101)

Dummett's point here is that lexical explanations must be understood as applying to sentential occurrences; and the correctness of this is not impaired by explanations which, like '"canine" signifies the class of dogs', make no overt reference to sentences (contra Rundle, 1990: 129). Such explanations implicitly rely on a sentential role in a way which Dummett's example shows.

What I wish to draw attention to is Dummett's allusion to traditional grammatical classifications. His observation that grammar plays a prominent role in lexical explanations is certainly to be applauded. Grammar is not simply syntax, however; grammatical misapplications do not issue solely in *structural* flaws–the inappropriateness of Chomsky's infamous 'Green ideas sleep furiously' being a case in point. 'Scowl"s intransitivity is syntactically characterizable, but not its restriction to creatures with faces. Sentences in which 'scowl' is *predicated* of something faceless, an obvious misapplication of the word–ignoring figurative and fictional uses–may be false, their negation true: 'Whatever he did, the worm did not *scowl* at the earlybird'. Likewise with 'Dummett's idea is a bright shade of green', despite its alleged 'category mistake'. Adjectives, too, follow this pattern: recall the difference between 'dead' and 'deceased'. Misapplications of 'deceased', for instance, are incorrect but not false in attributive occurrences, and false, hence incorrect, when used predicatively.

Analyses which play loose and fast with grammar are prone to spurious problems and gross mischaracterizations. Concern with reification of meanings provides a particularly good case in point. Dummett cautions that theories of meaning must respect "the principle . . . of the non-reification of meanings: we must not expect to be able to come up with explanations of the form, 'The meaning of the word W is . . .'" (1987c: 255). However, it is not entirely clear where the problem lies with such sentences, once completed. Plainly, 'The meaning of "obscene" is difficult to explain' and 'The meaning of "heap" is vague', are unexceptional, though admittedly non-explanatory. If such genuinely explanatory forms are to be precluded on the grounds that their completion by a referring expression yields an object as meaning, the worry is spurious: no such expression can fill the gap. This concern appears to arise from the mistake of treating 'the meaning of *w*' in this context as a referring expression. This common misreading is due to a failure to appreciate that 'the meaning of *w*' functions often as an interrogative clause, 'what *w* means': cf. 'What he said is clear' (for a detailed grammatical study of the verb 'means' and the nominal 'meaning' see, Stampe, 1968: especially 148-151, in this context). An objective reading is possible only if 'meaning' is interpreted as 'reference'. But then there is no problem in allowing an object as meaning, because this is just what reference requires. A sentence like 'The meaning of *w* is given by the formula "*w* signifies . . ."', completed by an expression for some thing or condition, is sufficiently explanatory–the expression 'given by' signalling that meaning is something to be *shown*, if not directly *stated*. Even direct specifications of the form 'The meaning of *w* is *v*', are by no means ruled out,

however, as 'The meaning of *toujours* is "always"' shows. The drawback with this form is not that '"always"' designates some entity as meaning, for it is not used referentially. Neither is it that this explanation relies on a prior understanding of the meaning of 'always', for every verbal definition must be given in some other, familiar, words. The shortcomings of such direct specifications relate to, one, the fact that a synonym is not guaranteed (whether homophonic or otherwise); and two, even where a suitable synonym emerges, this form does not take us to any *extralinguistic* conditions.

A related error encourages a common supposition that an adequate theory of meaning must generate theorems of the form '*S* means *that* p', or more generally '*S* means . . .', where the complement is supposed to be other than another mentioned expression. Apparently, a non-natural reading of 'means' with a *that*-clause as complement is possible only when the subject is 'factive', as in e.g., 'A single fire on the watchtower means that the enemy are defeated' (Stampe: 143-144, and Rundle, 1990: 186-189). Such a form is available for *utterances*; yet care must be taken to recognize that what is then directly specified is what is meant by–someone's– *making* the utterance, and not the meaning of its content. Careful attention to the grammar of 'means' and its relatives is indispensable, not least for its remedial potential.

The account of meaning offered in terms of correctness and representationality secures univocity across such larger units as 'having a meaning', 'the same meaning', 'knowing the meaning' and 'understanding the meaning'. While this is surely welcome, I see no call to give priority to any one of these. It hardly needs pointing out that meaning can be the object of

knowledge and of understanding; but the question is not, as Dummett sometimes puts it, 'What is it *to know* the meaning of an expression?', for this is mainly an epistemological query. Obviously, meaning must be knowable–in practice–otherwise language would be unlearnable; but a theory of meaning is not the same as a theory of knowledge. By the same token neither is it a theory of understanding. More recently, Dummett acknowledges the non-equivalence, though he still regards them as being "very closely related" (cf. 1981b: xiii, 74-77; for his earlier identification of the two, see e.g., 1976: 69; 1978: 444; 1981a: 92). While this may be true, it is not due to "the intuitive equivalence between the expressions 'to understand *A*' and 'to know what *A* means'": the 'intuitive equivalence' of these expressions by itself reveals only that it is understanding and knowledge, not understanding and meaning, which are thus closely related.

With respect to these complex expressions, *one* acceptable question is, as Dummett at other times puts it, '*What* is it that is known when one knows the meaning of an expression?'. But this differs little from the questions 'What is it that is the same in expressions which have the same meaning?' and 'What is it that an expression possesses when it possesses a meaning?'. Furthermore, what is known is also what is remembered, forgotten, learned and explained. If it is the concept of *meaning* we seek to clarify, in order to extract the maximum generality we must examine all occurrences unprejudiciously. Dummett himself omits what are among the most important expressions containing the term, namely, those used in explanations of meaning, e.g., '*To cry* means "to shed tears"', '*pleurer* means "to cry"', and such related forms as 'What *pleurer* means

is "to cry"' (recall Wittgenstein's dictum that meaning is what is explained in explanations of meaning: 1958a: 1). Such explicit forms are not restricted to metalinguistic theorizing or to dictionaries; it would be a gross caricature that depicted all ordinary talk about words and expressions as a sort of pre-theory, a poorer relation of analysis of the kind engaged in by specialists.

Speaking a language as rich and expressive as any natural language with which we are familiar is unquestionably a social phenomenon of unsurpassed complexity. Even so, it is something that virtually every child quickly picks up, and mostly without the aid of formal training. The practice of speaking a language is not really a single practice, but comprises many socio-linguistic behavioural conventions, the disentangling of whose interrelations is far from being a simple matter. It is comparable to an artful Oriental carpet: up close, the dazzling array of detail obscures any overall pattern, but on stepping back, a broad pattern rarely fails to emerge. Though we delight in scrutinizing a small detail in some far corner, it is the broad pattern which organizes the myriad features and guides our appreciation of their place within the weaver's overall scheme. Mastery of a language requires mastery of the many practices involved in speaking and understanding it, and individual competency is judged by the appropriateness of one's responses to the utterances of others, and by the appropriateness, under various conditions, of the utterances one makes. Lying at the heart of linguistic ability is a body of practical knowledge whose acquisition enables individuals thus to engage in this complex weave of social intercourse.

What we have settled on is a formula for characterizing, at the highest

level of generality, those conditions understood by competent speakers to be standardly associated with the correct use of the words and forms of their language. This may be viewed as going some way towards a doctrine of meaning as use, though a wholesale identification of the two is rejected: not every feature of use is to be reckoned a feature of meaning. Dummett advocates so close an identification of these notions that, consequently, tension arises between his view that use exhaustively determines meaning and his revisionist tendencies–at least if 'use' is understood as *actual* use. The failure to distinguish meaning from use may be responsible for Dummett's running together two other related but distinct concerns, namely, a theory of meaning and a theory of language.

The account of meaning in terms of representationality and correctness shows just how much, or how little, is accomplished by its provision. According to Dummett, the theory of meaning underlies all other philosophical analyses; none is complete, or at least is assessable as correct or otherwise, until agreement has been reached on the correct *form* such a theory is to take (see especially, 1976: 137; 1978: 454; 1981a: 668-676; 1991: 74-78). Although Dummett is careful to distinguish the point of an utterance from its meaning, he does not clearly separate the two projects of a theory of language and an analysis of the concept of meaning–a mistake which he himself has on (at least) one occasion acknowledged (1978: l; I am unaware of any other passages where he makes this admission). Ordinarily, Dummett identifies the form of philosophical analysis which he calls a theory of meaning *as* a 'theory of language'.

> The theory of meaning is not just an enquiry into a single unitary notion, that of meaning: it is a search for a general account of how language works, for a framework within which we can describe every feature of the use of sentences, and of how we are able to grasp, from the structure of any sentence, what the various features of its use are.
>
> (1981a: 46)

As I see it, a theory of language is the more comprehensive enterprise, encompassing both what I want to call 'theory of meaning' and the distinct (grammatical) analysis of the verb 'means' and its related forms. The first may be labelled more naturally 'philosophy of language', while the analysis of 'means' comprises a principal pillar in the 'theory of meaning' as this stands alongside the 'theory of knowledge', within which branch analysis of 'knows' is similarly central. The philosophy of language, then, is occupied with what may broadly be called uses of *language.* At this level there is plenty of overlap with the linguistic concerns of other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psychology and history. There is a legitimate doubt as to whether the framework of a theory of meaning in the narrower sense (of 'truth', 'assertibility', 'appropriateness' or what have you) can generate descriptions of *every* feature of use in the broader domain. If it is *this* conception which Wittgenstein opposes, there is ample reason to be sympathetic–though we must not overlook the possibility that different patterns may be discerned even here.

In any event, there is a multitude of uses of language, which though not featuring in an account of *meaning*, must nevertheless be mastered in order for individuals to get along in a myriad of situations. Roughly speaking, orientation of the broader concern tilts toward what is commonly called 'pragmatics'. Here, the idea of 'speaker meaning' looms large: Gricean implicatures, and the point of utterances of various kinds come to the fore, along with our varieties of tone.

Also included here are all non-literal uses and interpretations of expressions: figurative and fictional, metaphoric and symbolic. We learn, e.g., that in a law court we are not to address a judge by his given name. A military private is not to give orders to his *commanding* officer. Ordinarily, we do not tell jokes at funerals, or talk about divorce rates at weddings. Here, too, *one* difference between 'A girl named *Alison* moved in yesterday' and 'Alison moved in yesterday', whose invocation of the bare name carries a presumption of familiarity. Or, a fireman rouses his partner to action with the declaration, "Those aren't wedding bells!", whose contextual implications are evident. Conversational competency requires knowing all these things, and much more besides.

Natural languages encompass a *host* of 'language games', and the possibilities are endless. These can make special demands on speakers and place restrictions on what is permissible to say in certain contexts; moreover, they often impart to expressions special senses which may vary according to the 'game' or context. Clearly, a great deal must be learned piecemeal. Yet, not every sentence has to be learned as an utterly unique unit; there is much that is familiar in the new.

As I see it, the larger theory is dependent, in part, on analysis of the concept of meaning; for without it, the whole practice of using a language remains unintelligible. We would not be able to describe these uses of language for we would be incapable of saying what makes them uses of *language*. The description of the many uses to which sentences, especially, may be put–their actual and possible functions within a particular

community–rests upon their having the literal meanings which they do. The theory of meaning rests snugly hand in glove within the larger descriptive programme to which it contributes; but, as part of the larger domain it may also be informed by it. Nevertheless, the two are distinct. An analysis of 'meaning' in which individual words and linguistic form systematically combine to compose the meanings of arbitrary sentences will not delineate the entire range of functions to which sentences may be put, and therefore will not issue in a mastery of the practice of speaking the language, in Dummett's sense. The theory of meaning is embedded in the larger programme, but not in such a way that its central features figure in every aspect of the use of language comprising part of the complex social fabric.

Within the branch I am calling 'theory of meaning', analyses of particular expressions and classes of expressions, e.g., mass terms, natural kind terms, verbs of action, psychological verbs, and so on, and of forms such as conditionals, do not depend on a prior analysis of 'means' or 'meaning'. The correct analyses of particular expressions and forms feeds into the account of the concept of meaning, given at the highest level of generality, since at this level of analysis similarities and differences between various classes of terms, and the principles by which particular expressions are to be thus identified and classified are expected to be displayed. In other words, satisfactory analyses of particular expressions like 'exists', 'if', 'and', 'true', and others of which the philosophy of language treats, do not wait upon a theory of meaning, even in the restricted sense: they are to be subjected to exactly the same kind of analysis as all other terms in the language. In this sense 'meaning' has

absolutely no priority.

Questions about the proper *form* of a theory of meaning, as Dummett observes, are questions about the proper *form of analysis* (1981a: 668-669). As such, they are meta-theoretical. However, they are not merely methodological questions about how we are to *go about* analysing particular expressions like 'means' and 'meaning'; rather they are questions as to what general form of *resulting* analysis is acceptable. Still, questions of this nature apply as much to the analysis of 'meaning' as to any other expression, and so cannot be said to rely on a prior understanding of the concept. In fact, the characterization as correct or otherwise of a *general* form of analysis is to be judged on the basis of the correct analyses of the various individual concepts; otherwise there appears to be no way of getting started. We cannot assume in advance that conceptions of truth-conditionality, assertibility, representationality, or any others, will be applicable; rather, this is something which must be *arrived at* by careful and thorough examination of the characteristics of particular expressions and forms.

It also becomes implausible, then, that the criterion of correctness of a general form of analysis rests with the reflective judgment of ordinary speakers. Early on, Dummett promotes this test:

> . . . such a theory is not open to assessment in the same way as an ordinary empirical theory; it is not to be judged correct merely on the ground that it tallies satisfactorily with observed linguistic behaviour. Rather, the only conclusive criterion for its correctness is that the speakers of the language are, upon reflection, prepared to acknowledge it as correct, that is, as embodying those principles by which they are in fact guided.
>
> (1978b: 15)

The policy of 'ask the natives', while salutary in many respects, is not to be relied upon at this level of generality. Theory has to accord with actual use, and

there *is* a place for asking speakers about *this*. The 'judgment' of competent speakers is to be respected when it comes to questions about the correctness of analysis of actual or potential uses of particular expressions, including 'means' and 'meaning', and theories must be brought into line with such judgments, not the other way round. Quine, too, condemns such a test as involving "an oddly warped circle" (1972: 448); more recently, Dummett appears to recognize that the presumption that ordinary speakers should be the final arbiters of the correctness of a theory of meaning is problematic (1991: 96).

The concept of meaning may be as complex as any of which philosophy treats. Yet it is no more so than other concepts from which philosophers hope to extract understanding of a highly general character: those of *knowledge*, *causation*, *goodness*, *justice*, *freedom*, *will*, *beauty* and the like. If we incautiously overlook important differences, matters assume a more complicated look than they actually possess. A satisfactory conceptual analysis of *knowledge*, for example, will not issue in an increased ability to acquire knowledge, and neither will a satisfactory conceptual analysis of *meaning* enable anyone who understands it to do anything of which he was previously incapable–like speak the object language perfectly. But it *is* to be hoped that such analyses will help dispel confusions, providing a clearer vantage point on certain of our interests, and so rectifying, if not preventing, the kinds of error to which philosophy seems so characteristically prone. In the final analysis there is simply no substitute for detailed examination of a highly particularized form: we must take each and every form of expression as we find it, not as

preconceived on the basis of some theory. Stepping back from this work we can begin to piece together broader patterns which it is the business of the theory of meaning to articulate. In the case of meaning, the basic design is not patterned on truth.

Though this field has been scoured with many a fine-toothed comb, no doubt questions concerning meaning will continue to occupy philosophy for a long time to come. Certainly, much more can usefully be said on these matters than is contained herein. Doubt not that it will take a comb with plenty of bite to disentangle those Medusan snarls which continue to impair our vision.

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