CHAPTER 40

SHARED CONTENT

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A general and fundamental tension surrounds our concept of what is said. On the one hand, what is said (asserted, claimed, stated, etc.) by utterances of a significant range of sentences is highly *context sensitive*. More specifically, (Observation 1 (O1)), what these sentences can be used to say depends on their contexts of utterance. On the other hand, speakers face no difficulty whatsoever in using many of these sentences to say (or make) the exact same claim, assertion, etc., across a wide array of contexts. More specifically, (Observation 2 (O2)), many of the sentences in support of (O1) can be used to express the same thought, the same proposition, across a wide range of different contexts.

The puzzle is that (O1) and (O2) conflict: for many sentences there is evidence that what their utterances say depends on features $F_1 \ldots F_n$ of their contexts of utterance; while, at the same time, there is also evidence that two utterances of these sentences in contexts C and C′ express agreement, despite C and C′ failing to overlap on $F_1 \ldots F_n$.

Here's a simple illustration. What an utterance of (1) says depends in part on the contextually salient comparison class, standards of measurement, and other such things.

(1) Serena is really smart.

These data support (O1) for the comparative adjective ‘smart’. Yet, suppose all we tell you is that Venus uttered (1). We predict the following:

- There is a sense in which you can understand what Venus said, *viz.* that Serena is really smart.
- You can repeat what Venus said, i.e. do what we're about to do right now, *viz.* say the same as Venus did: Serena is really smart.
- You can indirectly report Venus by uttering (2):

(2) Venus said that Serena is really smart.

What's puzzling is how you can achieve all this without extensive knowledge of the contextually salient aspects of Venus' original utterance of (1). How can you do it without knowing exactly which comparison class, measurement method, etc., Venus' utterance picked out? Why does it seem not to be a requirement on your saying what Venus said that your context of utterance overlaps in relevant ways with hers?

Before elaborating, we want to say why this tension between observations (O1) and (O2) interests us.

First, there's a *Very Big Picture Issue* we want to draw attention to: contemporary philosophy of language has to a large extent lost sight of some fundamental facts about how we communicate *across* contexts. We can communicate and understand each other despite an overwhelming range of differences (in perceptual inputs, interests, cognitive processing, background assumptions, conversational contexts, goals, sense of relevance, etc.). This fact should be at the forefront of any reflection about communication, but it hasn't been.

Second, we want to use data in support of (O2) to raise objections to a range of so-called contextualist semantic theories constructed in response to data in support of (O1). Contemporary philosophy (and linguistics) is filled with well-supported observations of instances of (O1). On this basis alone, various categories of expression are, though hitherto unrecognized as such, inferred to be context sensitive. Examples from an extensive list include not just comparative adjectives like 'smart', but also quantifier expressions (e.g. 'every'), vague terms (e.g. 'red'), semantic expressions (e.g. 'true'), epistemic (e.g. 'know'), moral (e.g. 'good'), and psychological (e.g. 'believes') attributions, to name a few. Yet in *all* these cases, much like with 'smart', (O2) is well evidenced. These linguistic items can be used, in indirect reports, in ways that appear context *insensitive*.

The bottom line is that (O1) and (O2), at first blush, are incompatible, and so, no semantic theory that postulates context sensitivity based on (O1) is acceptable unless it shows how doing so is compatible with (O2). Most theorists, even those who acknowledge (O2), neglect to provide such explanations.

The paper divides into three parts. In Section 40.1–40.3, we present in greater detail the puzzle (or tension or whatever you want to call it); in Section 40.4–40.9, we discuss several failed solutions; and in §10, we present and defend our favored solution.

40.1 Contextual Variability in What-is-Said

How much variability is there in what can be said (asserted, claimed, etc.) with a single sentence in different contexts? For any sentence S, to answer this question, we must look to see whether speakers agree that, when uttered in differing contexts, what

S says varies. The consensus for many sentences S is (O1): *viz.* what S says depends on a context of utterance. (O1) is trivial for sentences which contain overt indexical or demonstrative expressions. What distinct utterances of 'I'm happy' or 'That's a boy' say differs contingent upon who is being indexed or demonstrated. However, as the above data render obvious, (O1) is no less trivial for distinct utterances of (1) (a sentence devoid of any obvious context sensitive expressions). What distinct utterances of (1) say differs contingent upon the contextually relevant comparison class or norm.

Watching Serena Williams playing tennis, entirely absorbed in her game, after a particularly clever play, Venus' utterance of (1) might say Serena is a really smart tennis player; however, Serena's agent's utterance of (1), in a context where the topic is astute negotiators in professional sports, might say that she is a really smart negotiator. The intuition is that what utterances of (1) say depends on which comparison class or norm a speaker intends or is contextually salient.

Quantifier sentences provide another easy illustration. In Alex's apartment, (3) can be used to assert *Alex rearranged all the furniture in his apartment*.

(3) Alex rearranged everything.

However, looking over a paper Alex has written, where he rearranged the sections, (3) can be used to say *Alex rearranged all the sections of his paper*. An obvious conclusion to draw is that what (3) says varies with context. More generally: since nothing special attaches to the quantifier expression 'every' or the comparative adjective 'smart' in these examples, what's said by quantifier or comparative adjective sentences varies across contexts.[1]

Exploiting these sorts of thought experiment, philosophers (and linguists) conclude that sentences not only containing comparative adjectives and quantifier expressions, but also those containing propositional attitude verbs, knowledge attributions, epistemic modals, counterfactual conditionals, vague terms, moral terms, aesthetic terms, weather and temporal reports, to name a few, can all be used to say different things in different contexts. (To limit discussion to a reasonable length, we assume some familiarity with the relevant literature. For the easiest and most compelling cases we recommend Cappelen and Lepore (2005), ch. 2.)

According to some[2] (including us), this observation generalizes: intuitions about context shifting generalize to all expressions. What began as a modest, though surprising, extension of the list of expressions whose usage can provoke intuitions about differences in what's said ultimately leads to a radical view that every expression can be so used (see Cappelen and Lepore (2005), ch. 3–5).

We turn to the second observation, which concerns content sharing.

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[1] There's another way to run these kinds of thought experiments: Describe an utterance of (3) in a context C and elicit the judgment it is true. Then describe an utterance (simultaneous) of (3) in another context C′ and elicit the intuition it is false. On this alternative, we don't try to elicit direct intuitions about what the speaker said, but simply intuitions about whether what was said (no matter what it was) is true or false. If these judgments differ, then this has to be because differing contents were expressed.

[2] Neo-Wittgensteineans like Bezuidenhout (1997, 2002); Carston (1998, 2002); Moravcsik (1990, 1998); Recanati (2001, 2004); Searle (1978, 1980); Sperber/Wilson (1986); Travis (1985, 1989, 1996), etc.

40.2 THE EASE OF CONTENT SHARING

Speakers, more often than not, succeed in mutual comprehension despite a diversity of beliefs, intentions, interests, goals, audiences, conversational contexts, and perceptual inputs. Not only do we easily understand each other despite such differences, we can even *share* content. We can say or think what you said or thought even though our contexts are radically different. In what follows, we want to remind readers of some obvious features of content sharing.

Here is a quote from an interview with John Kerry on National Public Radio in the summer of 2004:

(4) Dick Cheney and several other members of the Bush administration knew that Saddam Hussein posed no serious threat to the United States.

Had you heard this radio program, the following would be true about you:

a. You would understand what Kerry said.
b. You could tell us what Kerry said in either one of two ways:
  b1. You could repeat it, i.e. by uttering (4); if you uttered (4), you would have said what Kerry said in uttering (4). In fact, we'll do that right now: Dick Cheney and several other members of the Bush administration knew that Saddam Hussein posed no serious threat to the United States.

Using (4), we just said what Kerry said. Assuming our utterance sincere, etc., we expressed agreement with Kerry. Call two utterances of the same sentence that say the same, *disquotational same-saying* (DSS).

b2. You could indirectly report Kerry by uttering (5):

(5) Kerry said that Dick Cheney and several other members of the Bush administration knew that Saddam Hussein posed no serious threat to the United States.

Using (5) you succeed in saying something true about what Kerry had said. Call an indirect report where the complement clause is identical to the reported sentence (as in (5)) a *disquotational indirect report* (DIR).

(a) and (b) are simple achievements; we can understand, DSS, and DIR each other without remembering or knowing any of the particulars about the context in which the reported utterance was made. In particular, we do not need extensive knowledge of:

- the reported speaker's intentions;
- the intentions of the reported speaker's audience;
- the nature of the conversation the speaker was engaged in;
- the assumptions shared among participants in the original context;
- what was contextually salient in the original context of utterance;
- the perceptual inputs of those participants in the original context.

It is indisputable that speakers do not typically research such issues in order to DSS or DIR each other.[3] About such facts, they can remain ignorant, confused, mistaken and *still* understand each other (and DSS and DIR each other).[4] (O2) summarizes these points perfectly; let S be a sentence (without any obvious context sensitive expressions) for which (O1) is well documented. When S is used to DSS or DIR someone, it exhibits a high degree of context *insensitivity*.

We hope our illustrations are clear enough, but since this is an important part of our argument and also the point where we tend to meet great resistance, we will elaborate further below. For now we hope the data we have in mind are sufficiently transparent.

40.3 THE PUZZLE: SHARED CONVENT VS. CONTEXTUAL VARIABILITY

We're now in a position to represent clearly the tension this paper aims to explore and reconcile. In all the cases thus far mentioned, theorists find themselves faced with the following predicament: they first fasten on to a sentence S. On the one hand: intuitions are that what's said by utterances of S shifts across contexts, where S is thereby alleged to contain an unobvious context sensitive expression e. Call those features of context that fix the semantic values of an utterance of e (as it occurs in S) F. (For what goes into F, see above.) On the other hand: speakers in contexts not overlapping with respect to F (call these Relevantly Different Contexts (RD-Contexts)) can still use S to express the same content. That is, if C and C′ are RD-Contexts, and if A utters S in C, then B can truly utter,

A said that S

or she can utter just,

S

and in so doing succeed in saying what B said.

Or: consider many different utterances u_1-u_n of S in RD-contexts; B can in an RD-

Context say something true by using:

They all said that S

Or: take speaker A in two RD-Contexts; she can say something true using.

I once said that S

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[3] There are contexts in which we do; legal contexts spring to mind, but these are obvious exceptions.

[4] Of course, there are exceptions. See Cappelen and Lepore (1997) and (2005).

Furthermore: Even in cases where for one reason or another we do not find DDS natural, we seldom research the specific intentions and circumstances of the original utterance.

We hope the general structure of this tension is transparent. Here's an illustration.

40.3.1 Illustration of Puzzle

Reconsider (4).

(4) Dick Cheney and several other members of the Bush administration knew that Saddam Hussein posed no serious threat to the United States.

(4) contains context sensitive expressions, at least *according to various contextualists,* namely, 'several', 'no', 'knew', and 'serious'. There is extensive evidence that what sentences with these words can be used to say varies with context. (4), by virtue of containing *four* such words, exhibits complex variation depending on the context domain for 'several', 'no', and the epistemic standards for 'know', and the comparison class and measurement standards for 'serious'. In other words, what Kerry said with his utterance of (4) depends on an exceedingly complex set of contextual factors.

If this is true, then in order for someone to use (4) to iterate what Kerry said, she needs to be in a context where the relevant contextual variables fix exactly the same semantic values. That, however, doesn't seem required. We can grasp Kerry's content (i.e. understand him) and re-express his content, using (4) even though the contextual parameters of our context of utterance might differ from those in Kerry's.

40.3.2 Example of Theory That Can't Deal with Puzzle: Stanley and Szabo on Quantifiers

To see the significance of this puzzle and, more specifically, the ways in which (O2) is overlooked, we turn to an influential semantics for quantifiers. Stanley and Szabo (2000) defend the view that domain restrictions on quantifiers should be accounted for within a semantic theory. According to them, noun phrases harbor a hidden argument place that takes as its value in context a domain restriction. The domain of a quantifier, then, is the intersection of the class picked out by the nominal attached to the quantifier and the domain restriction. So, with an utterance of 'Every bottle is F', the domain of 'every bottle' consists of the intersection of the set of all bottles and the set picked out by the contextually determined domain restriction. (If that, for example is, the set of things in room 401, then the domain consists of bottles in room 401.) The domain restriction gets fixed in context. That's how they account for (O1) for sentences with quantifiers: the domain restriction varies, and hence, what's said varies from one context of utterance to another.

Actually, their view is a bit more refined: they write, 'The domain contexts provide for quantifiers are better treated as intensional entities such as *properties*, represented as functions from worlds and times to sets' (Stanley and Szabo, 2000: 252). So, a sentence of the form ‘Every F is G’ has as its logical form ‘Every F[p] is G’ and an utterance of this sentence is true just in case every F that has the property p is G.

If this view were correct, then two utterances u_1 and u_2 of a sentence S containing a quantifier phrase can express the same proposition, can make the same claim, *only if* the context for u_1 delivers the same property as a value for the domain variable as the context for u_2 does. To see how difficult this is, consider this example (originally from Stanley and Williamson (1995)).

(6) Every sailor waved to every sailor.

Note that there can, intuitively, be two different domains attached to the two occurrences of ‘sailor’. As Stanley and Szabo note, ‘This sentence can express the proposition that every sailor on the ship waved to every sailor on the shore’ (Stanley and Szabo, 2000: 259).

We’re not interested in the phenomenon of intra-sentential domain shift as such, but the slight complexity of this case makes it a convenient example for our purposes. Consider two sailors on the ship, Popeye and Bluto. After the sad departure, Popeye observes, ‘That was such a nice occasion. Every sailor waved to every sailor.’ Immediately afterwards, Bluto concurs: ‘That’s right. Every sailor waved to every sailor.’

In such a circumstance the following is often obvious: we treat these two utterances as expressing agreement. Popeye and Bluto agree that every sailor waved to every sailor.

If Stanley and Szabo (and almost all others) were right about the semantics for quantifiers, their concurrence would be a minor miracle. Consider all the possible properties that could be picked out as a domain restriction for the first occurrence of ‘every sailor’ in Popeye’s utterance:

- Person on the ship
- Living creature on the ship
- Person standing on the deck
- Person standing or sitting on the deck
- Person that Bluto saw on the deck of the ship
- Person I saw not asleep on deck
- People over there
- Etc.

There are literally infinitely many other possibilities, most of which would pick out the same set, but some of which would not. Then there is another infinite set of possibilities for the other occurrence of ‘every sailor’.

Our point is this: If Stanley and Szabo were correct, Bluto can make the same claim as Popeye, i.e. agree with Popeye, *only if* his utterance picks out the exact same properties for the two occurrences of ‘every sailor’. Though it’s not impossible for this to happen, its likelihood is, to put it mildly, rather slim.[5] Even though they were both on deck, they didn't have the exact same sensory inputs, they didn't share the same background beliefs; they most certainly will have focused on different aspects of the situation, etc. No two people on the deck of a ship overlap in all these respects. Since these are the factors that determine domain restrictions, Popeye and Bluto are quite likely to have expressed different propositions,[6] and hence, not to agree with each other.

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[5] There’s a familiar line of argument going back to Wettstein’s (1981) to the effect that there’s no way to choose between one or the other of these domains. (See also Blackburn (1988); Schiffer (1995); Neale (1990); Lepore (2004); Cappelen and Lepore (2005).) That’s not our point here. We’re being charitable

And that's not the end of the story: remember, Popeye and Bluto are both sailors; they were, we imagined, on the ship together. We, i.e. C&L, are not sailors and were not on that ship. Nonetheless, we can tell you what Popeye and Bluto both said, *viz. that every sailor waved to every sailor*. And you, the reader, can understand what we said. It's all quite easy. Of course, if Stanley and Szabo were right, and we had to figure out the exact property picked out by Popeye's and Bluto's respective utterances, and you, the reader, had to figure out what we had figured out, then we couldn't do that. Were Stanley and Szabo right, we could, for all practical purposes, relinquish the idea that we ever share content using sentences involving quantifiers.[7]

Stanley and Szabo's theory is not a particularly egregious example of a semantic theory that in a rush to account for (O1), fails to account for (O2). It's representative of much of what goes on in semantics today. We draw the same conclusions, e.g. about Crimmins and Perry's treatment of belief reports as context sensitive (Crimmins and Perry, 1989; Crimmins, 1992); Lewis' treatment of counter-factual conditionals as context sensitive (Lewis, 1973; cf., also, Bach, 1994: 128–9); contextualist epistemic and moral accounts (DeRose, 1992, 1995; Cohen, 1991, 1999; Unger, 1995; Dreier 1990), right on down to the global contextualist positions of Travis (1987, 1996); Searle (1980); and Recanati (2004). Each account in an effort to respect (O1) either ignores or blatantly disrespects (O2).

How, then, should we respond to the puzzle in order to reconcile these two observations?

40.4 OVERVIEW OF SOLUTIONS

The possible solutions divide into several rough categories:

1. *Deny (O1):* There are two ways to do this:
   1.a Deny that speakers have beliefs/intuitions that content varies between contexts.
   1.b Agree that speakers have beliefs/intuitions that there's content variability, but argue that this common sense view is wrong.

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towards Stanley and Szabo; we grant them that there is a way (though we don't know how, and Stanley and Szabo never tell us), for Popeye's utterance to pick out a unique property. Given that assumption we ask: How can we ever ensure that Bluto picks out the *same* domain as Popeye? He has to do that in order to say what Popeye said.

[6] Problem: Stanley and Szabo insist that they are not doing foundational semantics (2000: 225).

[7] We hope it is clear how to generalize the point made above so it applies to all quantifier expressions, comparative adjectives, etc.

2. *Deny (O2):* Again, there are two options:
   2a Deny that speakers have beliefs/intuitions that content is invariant across contexts.
   2b Agree that speakers have beliefs/intuitions that speakers can share contents across varied contexts (and do so using the same sentences), but argue that this common sense view is wrong.
3. *Compromise Strategy:* Show that there's no incompatibility between (O1) and (O2). What we have presented is the mere appearance of a puzzle or dilemma, but once these two observations are properly contextualized and interpreted, they are not incompatible.

This leaves quite a range of possible solutions to our puzzle. Since this is not a book, we can't explore them all to the extent we would like (though, we are writing a book on this, so for those interested, stay tuned). In the sections which follow we address various potential solutions, including various ways of denying (O1) and (O2), Similarity Theory, Subject Sensitivity, Relativism about Truth, and finally, our own, Pluralistic Minimalism. We used to try to fit these various proposed solutions neatly into the above five options, but most interesting solutions tend to take a little from each possible solution, and so, they do not fit neatly into any one single category. In what follows we'll not spill any ink trying to relate solutions to options (1)–(3), but instead leave that as an exercise for the reader.

40.5 Denial of (O2)

The options we just surveyed leave a wide range of possible solutions to the puzzle. We'll begin with (2a) and (2b). However, we want to offer a brief justification for why we don't think we need to pursue options (1a) and (1b).

About (1a), note that as formulated (O1) and (O2) are *atheoretical*; they don't invoke a theoretical notion of 'what is said'. They are intended simply to register that we don't encounter a lot people who resist the initial reactions ascribed to these examples above. There is a wide consensus that different utterances of sentences containing, for example, comparative adjectives, or quantifiers, or even 'know' and 'good', vary in content, *in some sense of 'content' and in some sense of 'vary'*, as in (O1). (We believe there is also a wide consensus that we can repeat and report what others say with such sentences, as in (O2); more below.)

About (1b), all we have to say is that we don't know a lot of philosophers who would pursue this strategy (though we suppose there is a way of interpreting Subject Sensitivity as endorsing (1b) for some locutions; see § 40.7 below), and so, we won't discuss it here.

40.5.1 Solution 1: Denial that we Have O2 Intuitions (i.e. (2a))

One objection we often encounter is that our examples in support of (O2) fail. Those who raise this objection aim to show that the cases where there's genuine variability (i.e. where (O1) holds) are cases where there's no DIR or DSS in relevantly different contexts (i.e. are cases where (O2) fails). They'll say things like: For quantifiers and comparative adjectives, (O1) holds, but (O2) does not. Where (O2) holds, (O1) doesn't.

40.5.1.1 *What Does Denying (O2) Involve?*

First, it is important to be clear on the nature of this disagreement, i.e. to be clear on what exactly the differences are between our claim and our opponents'. So, let S be a sentence containing a comparative adjective or a quantifier phrase:

We claim: The following often happens:

S1: A utters S in C, B utters S in C′, C and C′ can be relevantly different, and yet A and B say the same (make the same claim, i.e. agree (they can DSS each other)).

S2: A utters S in C. B utters 'A said that S' in C′, C and C′ can be relevantly different, and yet B succeeds in saying something true (i.e. they can DIR each other).[8]

Our opponent's claim: Both S1 and S2 are impossible; there are *no* cases such as those described in S1 and S2.

To understand the puzzle/tension that concerns us it is important to realize that all we need (to generate the puzzle) is a single instance of S1 or S2. As it happens, we think instances of S1 and S2 are ubiquitous. But even if there were only a few cases, the phenomenon would be no less interesting and no less puzzling. Remember, if S contains a context sensitive term, and if C and C′ are relevantly different contexts of utterance (i.e. the semantic value of S when uttered in C differs from when uttered in C′) and if either S1 or S2 obtains, then there is, as we claim, a fundamental tension at the heart of our notion of what's said. On the one hand, we're postulating context sensitivity in S to explain how what's said varies from context to context. On the other, our notion of what's said recognizes some kind of stability across such relevantly different contexts. We're trying to find a theory that accounts for both.

With that clarification out of the way, we focus on what would constitute a legitimate objection to (O2).

40.5.1.2 *What Would Count as Evidence Against (O2)?*

Expressions fall into three classes with respect to S1 and S2:

Class 1: Sentences containing them can never be DIR-ed or DSS-ed in relevantly different contexts. Examples: 'I' and 'here'.

Class 2: Can always be DIR-ed and DSS-ed in relevantly different contexts. Examples (though these are not uncontroversial): 'and', 'know', and 'red'.

Class 3: Can sometimes (i.e. in some contexts) be DIR-ed and DSS-ed, and sometimes not. Examples (we claim): Comparative adjectives, quantified noun phrases, 'left', 'enemy', 'local', etc.

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[8] We are, of course, assuming that S is either free of obvious indexicals or that the reader makes the obvious adjustments to control for their occurrence.

The third category is typically overlooked, but it provides by far the most interesting challenges; and it might even be that all instances allegedly in Class 2 are really, when you think hard about it, in Class 3 (though we don't base any of our arguments here on that assumption).

You obviously can't counter-example the claim that an expression is in Class 3. The claim is only that speakers *sometimes* DIR and DSS utterances of such expressions in relevantly different contexts. That claim cannot be refuted by showing there are *some* relevantly different contexts in which we do not do so.

So, then, what would constitute an argument against the claim that an expression is in Class 3? As we see it, there are but two kinds of arguments:

a. You can have some general theory from which it follows that Class 3 expressions are impossible.
b. You can dispute the examples we present as evidence of their Class 3 status. For every example we present, you can show that our intuitions are confused, idiosyncratic or in some other way possible to explain away.

We won't consider (a) here. Our goal is to refute theories that have this implication, so any appeal to a theoretical framework would simply beg the question against us. With respect to (b), we also don't have that much to say, because we don't know exactly what other philosophers will say in response to our examples. We'll restrict our comments to one rather general remark about how *not* to respond to our examples (and certainly leave open the possibility that we're overlooking some ingenious reply).

40.5.1.3 *How not to Respond to Examples of Class 3 Expressions*

There is a trick in constructing examples to best illustrate (O2). Our claim is that we often treat two utterances as having expressed the same content, and when we do so, *we ignore the details of their respective contexts of utterance;* we ignore factors about the context of utterance that we would have focused on were we 'in the context' or were our interests only in one of the utterances, and not in comparing them. We are trying to imagine ourselves in a situation where the differences between u_1 and u_2 are *neither* salient *nor* relevant. We want examples where the participants are not focusing on or indeed don't care about or might be ignorant of the details of two utterances u_1 and u_2 of S. To do so we need examples that mimic this kind of situation. Examples that are frontloaded with detailed descriptions of what the individual speakers of u_1 and u_2 had in mind, what they wanted to communicate, how they should be interpreted, are, for obvious reasons, ill-suited for this purpose.

Here's one such example (a typical one) from Hawthorne's *Knowledge and Lotteries* (the goal of the example is to show that you can't DIR comparative adjectives across relevantly different contexts):

> . . . the following disquotational schema for 'tall' is clearly unacceptable:
>
> *Disquotational Schema for 'Tall'*: If an English speaker S sincerely utters something of the form 'A is tall' and 'A' refers to *a*, then S believes of *a* that *a* is tall.

> Suppose I am a coach discussing basketball players. Meaning 'tall for a basketball player' by 'tall', I cannot report an ordinary English speaker as believing that Allen Iverson is tall on the grounds that such a person sincerely uttered 'He is tall', where 'He' referred to Allen Iverson. (Hawthorne, 2003: 106)

This example explicitly tells us that the speaker did *not* intend to say the same as the reporter. By so doing, Hawthorne has created a context in which it is almost impossible for us to see the two utterances as saying the same. He has drawn our attention to, and hence, rendered salient and relevant the *differences* between these two utterances. These differences, however, blind us to their common content.

The lesson to draw from this and like 'counter-examples', for those wanting to explain away our (O2) intuitions, is to *not* try to explain these intuitions away by re-describing the contexts of utterance we appeal to; that is, don't change the focus or the interests of the participants. To do so in the context of discussing (O2) is cheating. We, quite frankly, suspect that any attempt to rebuff (O2) examples will involve exactly this kind of cheating. We have, however, no proof of that, and we keep an open mind on the issue.

So, then, what kinds of examples are good for illustrating (O2)? To begin with, is our example involving the two sailors, Popeye and Bluto. When describing their utterances, we emphasized what they had in common: they more or less were made at the same place and at the same time; the two sailors were participants in the same conversation; and their interests were in sailors who wave at each other, etc. Only afterwards did we go on to tell you about their differences: they saw somewhat different aspects of the relevant situation; they had somewhat different reactions to what they saw, etc. That is, only after we had characterized what they had in common did we let on that there's a whole range of differences between them that might lead you to think the domains picked out are different. This situation is not peculiar. This is exactly the relationship most of us stand in most of the time to those with whom we are agreeing or interpreting or reporting.

As soon as we've filled in more, we stop being so inclined. But that does not mean our initial reaction was wrong; it just means that once you've gathered more information, your relationship to the two utterances is suddenly significantly different from what it was before. As we see it, you're not getting closer to the truth about the two utterances; your interest in, and cognitive reactions to them, change in a way so that it becomes almost impossible to focus on the shared content. Increased knowledge of particular contexts undermines our sense of it same-saying other utterances.

40.5.2 Solution 2: Denial of Shared Content (i.e. (2b))

According to (2b), some speakers think they can say *the same thing* using S in different contexts but contextual considerations show they can't. They think they share content across contexts, but they're fundamentally confused.

Contingent on how widespread contextual variability extends, the point generalizes: no two people ever say the same, no two people ever agree or disagree on the same content, no two people ever *fully* understand each other (never understand exactly what the other has said). You cannot understand exactly what we're saying in this article (indeed, you don't even fully understand this sentence).

How plausible is this strategy? We think not very and will offer several objections/challenges to it.

Criticism 1: Explain Why we Developed Defective Reporting Practices

Anyone who claims the intuitions behind (O2) are false must explain how we came to develop linguistic practices in which we invariably make false claims. Anyone who wants to claim that all reports are false must explain why this practice didn't evolve into one in which we used 'said that' to make, on the whole, true judgments; if there's no shared content, it would be remarkable that 'said that' required it.

Criticism 2: Apparent Methodological Inconsistency

We are being asked to accept intuitions about variability in what was said as evidence for (O1) (obviously, that's the evidence that what was said varies between contexts), but at the same to deny intuitions that support shared content across contexts. But why should we treat one set of intuitions differently from another? That's an entirely unjustified asymmetry in relationship to intuitions.

Criticism 3: Account for Implications for Non-Linguistic Practices

Our practice of sharing content is inextricably intertwined with other practices that figure centrally in our non-linguistic lives.

- **Coordinated Action:** Often, people in different contexts are asked to do the same thing, e.g. pay taxes. They receive the same instructions, are bound by the same rules, the same laws and conventions. For such instructions to function, we must assume a wide range of utterances express the same content.
- **Collective Deliberation:** When people over a period of time, across a variety of contexts, try to find out whether something is so, they typically assume content stability across those contexts. Consider a CIA task force concerned with whether Igor knows that Jane is a spy. They are unsure whether or not he does. Investigators, over a period of time, in different contexts study this question. If what they are trying to determine, i.e. whether Igor knows that Jane is a spy, changes across contexts, contingent, for example, on their evidence, what is contextually salient, the conversational context, etc. collective deliberation across contexts would make no sense.
- **Intra-Personal Deliberation:** Suppose Igor, on his own, is trying to determine whether p is so. Suppose its being so makes a difference to his life, but he's unsure. Sometimes he thinks the evidence, on balance, supports p, sometimes not. It depends on how he looks at the evidence, on what he takes to be the relevant considerations. Just as in the inter-personal case, this presupposes a stable content he's deliberating about.

- **Justified Belief:** Much of our knowledge of the world is based on testimony. Hearing a trustworthy person assert that p can provide good reason to believe that p. If we think everything Jason says is true and he says naked mole rats are blind, we have good reason to believe naked mole rats are blind. But this is possible only if we can say what he said, *viz.,* that naked mole rats are blind. We need to understand (and remember) what he said. We have to be in a position to agree with it. This is possible only if content can be shared across contexts.
- **Responsibility:** We hold people responsible for what they say, ask, request, claim, etc. We can do so only if we, in another context, can *understand* what they said (suggested, ordered, claimed, etc.), *say* what they said, and *investigate* what they said.
- **Reasons for Actions:** A closely connected phenomenon is this: What others say often provides reasons for action. What people said in another context can provide reason for action only if we can understand what they have said, investigate it, trust it, etc.

These inter-connections and mutual dependencies between content stability and non-linguistic practices are significant because any theory that implies content is *not*, strictly speaking, shared across contexts or, at least, isn't shared in the conversations in which we think it is, must account for the devastating implications that this view has for these non-linguistic practices. To endorse a view that implies that what we do in all these cases is based on a fundamental confusion that we have about the nature of our own language is an awfully high price to pay to protect contextualism.

Of course, we could be fundamentally mistaken about ourselves in just these ways, but at least this much is clear: if you are inclined to bite this bullet, you had better provide an alternative account of these non-linguistic practices.

These criticisms are more challenges, we suppose, than conclusive objections. Perhaps there is a way around them. We turn to the chief attempt to do so; an attempt that aims to reconcile (O1) and (O2) in letter if not in spirit.

40.6 Solution 3: Compromise by Appeal to Similarity

An impatient reader might ask: What's the problem! So what if we can't share content across contexts? Isn't similarity sufficient? We can make (O2) compatible with (O1) if we hold the view that in order for two speakers A and B to say the same they only need to make utterances *similar* in content. Here's a representative passage from Bezuidenhout (1997):

> Since utterance interpretation is always in the first place colored by one's own cognitive perspective, I think we should reject the idea that there is an intermediate stage in communication which involves the recovery of some content shared by speaker and listener and which is attributed by the listener to the utterance. In communication . . . . . . [w]*e need*

> *recognize only speaker-relative utterance content and listener-relative utterance content and a relation of similarity holding between these two contents* . . . This does not mean that we have to deny that lateral interpretation requires the preservation of something. But this something need simply be a relevant degree of similarity between the thought expressed by the speaker and the thought expressed by the listener. (Bezuidenhout 1997: 212–13; emphasis our own)

Likewise, Sperber and Wilson (1986) write:

> . . . It seems to us neither paradoxical nor counterintuitive to say that there are thoughts that we cannot exactly share, and that communication can be successful without resulting in an exact duplication of thoughts in communicator and audience. We see communication as a matter of enlarging mutual cognitive environments, not of duplicating thoughts. (Sperber/Wilson 1986, pp.192-3)

Related points are made by Heck (2002); Recanati (2004); and Carston (2002).

These are all instances of what we call the Similarity View (SV)—a view, as far as we can tell, that has never been elaborated; therefore, much of what we have to say is speculative. According to SV:

> Sentences like 'A said that p', 'A said what B said', 'I agree with what A said', 'I understand exactly what I said', and the other such locutions do *not* require for their truth content *identity* across contexts. All they require is content *similarity* across contexts. The details can be elucidated in various ways, one version of which is:
>
> - 'A said that p' means the same as 'A said something similar to p.'
> - 'A said what B said' means the same as 'A said something similar to what B said.'
> - 'A and B agree' means the same as 'A and B endorse similar thoughts.'
> - 'A understands what B said' means (something like) 'A grasped a proposition similar to the one expressed by B.'

And so on for other cases. According to SV, we do not make false claims when reporting or repeating others. Our practice has, wisely, factored in that there is no cross contextual content identity. In this way (O1) and (O2) are rendered compatible.[9]

Five Criticisms of SV

Some of our criticisms might be distinct versions of the same criticism (depending on how criticisms are individuated); each would be easier to present were a precise version of SV available. Before turning to criticism, however, we want briefly to record a possible methodological inconsistency in the discussion suggesting replacing (O2) with SV. For, if intuitions about utterances saying the same are not intuitions about genuine sameness of content, then what evidence can there be for variability of content, i.e. for (O1)?

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[9] Alternatively, we could phrase SV so that reporting and repeating are based on a false assumption, *viz.*, that contents are shared (in any sense) across contexts. Claims like 'A said that p', 'I agree with A', and 'He's ordered me to do . . .' are *all* false. This version of SV denies any intuitions/beliefs about what others say is ever correct. For the reasons cited above, we find this view unattractive. Further, our objections to SV apply (in modified form) to this view as well.

Remember, the intuitions that support (O1) are intuitions to the effect that utterances u_1 and u_2 say different things. But if saying the same is no evidence of having the same content, why should saying different things be evidence of differences in content?

What the similarity theorist needs is a way to connect differences in saying to differences in semantic content, and she needs to do that in a way that's compatible with her account of same-saying. She needs something like (P):

(P) u_1 and u_2 have the same semantic content only if they say the same.

It *does* follow from (P) that if two utterances say something different, they have different semantic contents. The central challenge for any version of SV, then, becomes this: How, according to SV, can you get evidence for the relationship between semantic contents and same-saying? The SV theorist needs some *independent* way to access semantic content, fix it, and then, compare semantic content with what was said. But no such method has been presented, and we expect, it never will be.

As you'll see below, we're sympathetic to the idea that intuitions about saying are not, in general, evidence for semantic content. But *we* can hold that view because we have a theory about how speakers access semantic contents and also about how semantic content and speech act content are to be compared.

We turn now to criticisms of SV.

Criticism 1: When SV is made Explicit it's Absurd

Try to render SV explicit as follows:

- Let u and u′ be two utterances of 'A is tired' in two contexts C and C′.
- Each expresses a proposition: u express the proposition *that A is too tired to go running;* u′ express the proposition *that A is too tired for any kind of strenuous physical activity*.

We (i.e. C&L) are in a café in NYC. Call our current context (i.e. the one in which we are performing these speech acts) NYC. In NYC we affirm (referring to the utterances of u and u′) either (S1) or (S2):

(S1) They said the same.
(S2) They made the same claim.

Suppose NYC is a context in which these two propositions are indeed similar. We assume there are such contexts, but even if there aren't (we can't imagine why not), that doesn't matter for our argument: articulate two propositions different but similar to each other in a context C and run the argument on those propositions. Recall, according to SV, (S1) and (S2) are true if the propositions expressed by utterances u and u′ are similar according to the standards of NYC. But then it follows from

SV that our utterances of (S1) and (S2) are true in NYC. But since u says *that A is too tired to go running* and u′ says *that A is too tired to engage in any kind of strenuous physical activity*, it also follows that, contrary to assumption, they *didn't* say the same thing. One, after all, said she was too tired to go running; and the other said she was too tired to engage in any kind of strenuous physical activity. These are different. Maybe they say something *similar*, but they surely do not *the same*.

In other words, as soon as we insist on making explicit the alleged similar propositions, and comparing them, it becomes obvious that expressing these propositions constitutes at most saying something similar (whatever that might mean), but *not* saying the same.

Here is another way to put this point (if it seems repetitive, we apologize): Suppose an utterance u of 'A is tired' expresses, say, for the sake of simplicity, the proposition *that A is tired*. According to SV, a different utterance u′ needn't express the same proposition in order to say the same as u. But how can that be? If u′ doesn't express the proposition *that A is tired*, it presumably expresses another one, say, the proposition *that A is too tired to go jogging*. But saying *that A is tired* isn't the same as saying *that A is too tired to go jogging*. Or, at least if it is, we need an argument to relinquish intuitions to the contrary.

Criticism 2: SV doesn't Explain Our Distinction between Saying *Exactly* What Someone said and Saying Something *Similar* but *not Identical*?

If 'A said that p' means 'A expressed a proposition similar to p', then how do we interpret sentences like:

- He almost said that p, but didn't.
- He came very close to saying that p, but didn't.
- What he said was similar to p, but not exactly p.

The easiest way to focus this criticism is to think about (SA):

(SA) She didn't say that p, but she said something similar to p.

In uttering (SA), we don't mean what SV predicts. According to SV, 'said that' means 'said something similar to', so (SA) should mean:

(SAS): S didn't say that p, but said that p.

That is not what (SA) means.[10]

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[10] Ted Sider, in discussion, suggested that what (SA) really should mean is, 'She didn't say that p, but she said something similar to something similar to p.' If a is similar to b and b similar to c, it doesn't follow a is similar to b, i.e. it doesn't follow that she said something similar to. Sider's objection conflates the meta-language 'said' with the object language 'said.' The view we are considering is presented in English, i.e. in presenting this view we assume that the interpretation of 'said something similar to p' does not mean 'said something similar to something similar to p.' See Segal (1989): 84–86.

In sum: If content similarity is employed to explain what's meant by 'saying the same,' it becomes impossible to explain what's meant by 'saying something similar, but not identical.'

Criticism 3: False Predictions made by SV

There is no *a priori* reason to think there's no context in which the two propositions P and Q are similar.

(P) The US has 49 states.
(Q) The US has 50 states.

But, then, SV predicts that (in some context) it is true to say that someone who said *that the US has 49 states* said *that the US has 50 states*. But that's absurd. No one who said the US has 49 states said the US has 50 states.

The point generalizes: Any two objects are similar in some respect or other. Here is what follows: Take an utterance u by A and an arbitrary proposition p. It follows from SV, *in some respect, that A said that p.* It also follows that in some context, it should be true to report u by uttering 'A said that p.'

Illustration: Let A make an utterance u of a sentence that expresses the proposition *that Uma Thurman has green eyes;* and let p be the proposition *that there are lots of naked mole rats in South Africa*. These two propositions are similar in *some* respects. Therefore, on SV, no *a priori* reason prohibits contexts in which this similarity is relevant. It follows from SV that we should be able truthfully to say: 'In some respects, A said that there are lots of naked mole rats in South Africa.'

The flip side is: Consider a context C in which B utters 'A was tired'. Suppose u expresses the proposition p. Consider a context C′ in which 'A was tired' expresses a different proposition q. Suppose in C′ the standards of similarity are such that p and q are *not* relevantly similar. (There will be some p, q and C′ for which this is so.) Notice that in C′, it is not true to utter 'B said that A was tired' in reference to u. We doubt there are any such contexts. If B uttered 'A was tired', it is true to say B said that A was tired. *Nothing* about the context of utterance can render that false. (See Section 40. 9 below.)

Criticism 4: Claims About Degrees of Similarity and Comparative Similarity are Unintelligible in Connection with 'said that' Claims

We can make intelligible and even true similarity judgments of the form:

- A is more similar to B than to C.
- A is a little bit like B.
- A is like B in some respects.

According to SV, ‘A said that p’ means ‘A expressed a proposition that’s similar to p’ but that predicts we should not only be able to make sense of, but also make, true judgments of the form:

- A said p more than q.
- A said p a little bit.
- A said p in some respects.

But such judgments are hardly intelligible and certainly play no significant role in our practice of indirectly reporting others.[11]

Criticism 5: Identity is Transitive; Similarity is not

Our final criticism is an old chestnut exploiting the non-transitivity of ‘similarity’. If A said the same as B and B said the same as C, then A and C said the same as well. But if A said something similar to B and B said something similar to C, it simply doesn’t follow that A said something similar to C. So, the view that ‘A said that p’ means the same as ‘A said something similar to p’ is false.

In summary: to be fair, SV has an advantage over blanket rejections of (O1) and (O2) by virtue of respecting these observations. It explains how two utterances of the same sentence can say something the same and something different; it all depends on relevant standards of similarity. Unfortunately, its problems are insuperable.

We turn now to another sort of effort to reconcile (O1) and (O2).

40.7 Solution 4: Subject Sensitivity

Hawthorne (2004) tentatively defends a semantics for ‘know’ he calls ‘Sensitive Moderate Invariantism’ (SSI). It is a view motivated exactly by the kinds of considerations we have presented, although our presentation was more general in form. It can be understood as a local solution, a local fix, to our puzzle. (A closely related view has been developed by Stanley, ‘Context, Interest-Relativity and Knowledge’•; Graff (2000) develops a version of this view applied to vague terms; see also Stanley’s reply

• Q1

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[11] Another criticism, which we will not elaborate on here, but instead refer the reader to *Insensitive Semantic,* concerns the failure of ‘said that’ to pass key tests for context sensitivity. According to proponents of SV, ‘similar’ is context sensitive, i.e. what’s similar to what depends on the contextually salient features being compared. As a consequence, ‘said that’ is context sensitive, i.e. ‘A said that p’ can be true when uttered in one context, and false when uttered in another. But ‘said that’ is context *in*sensitive. We have developed various tests for identifying context sensitivity: *viz.*, Disquotational Indirect Report Test (singular and collective); Collection Test; VP-deletion test, and ICD/RCSA. The locution ‘said that’ fails to pass any of these tests for context sensitivity. See *Insensitive Semantics*, ch. 7.

• Q2 (Stanley (forthcoming)•). We focus our discussion on Hawthorne's version,[12] but with small modifications it generalizes to these other versions.)

Sensitive Moderate Invariantism is motivated by two lines of argument: on the one hand, it challenges the view that 'know' is semantically context sensitive. Many of Hawthorne's arguments are based on the way we go about reporting knowledge attributions, i.e. on how we say what others have said when they use the word 'know'. He argues these practices are inconsistent with the view that 'know' is context sensitive.

On the other hand, he argues against the view that knowledge attributions are entirely context *in*sensitive. There is evidence, indeed overwhelming evidence, that there is some sort of context sensitivity in knowledge attributions, according to Hawthorne this is not context sensitivity in the sense that different utterances of "A knows that p at time t" have different semantic contents depending on their contexts of utterance. Here Hawthorne's suggestion in summary form:

> For suppose instead that the kinds of factors that the contextualist adverts to as making for ascriber dependence—attention, interests, stakes and so on—had bearing on the truth of knowledge claims only insofar as they were the attention, interests, stakes and so on of the subject. Then the relevance of attention, interests, and stakes to the truth of knowledge ascriptions would not, in itself, force the thesis of semantic context dependence. Here is the picture. Restricting ourselves to extensional matters, the verb 'know' picks out the same ordered triples of subject, time, and proposition in the mouths of any ascriber. However, whether a particular subject/time/proposition triple is included in the extension of 'know' depends not merely upon the kinds of factors traditionally adverted to in accounts of knowledge . . . but also upon the kinds of factors that in the contextualist's hands make for ascriber dependence. These factors will thus include (some or all of) the attention, interests, and stakes of that subject at that time. (Hawthorne 2004, pp. 157–58)

On this view, knowledge attributions are sensitive to the non-epistemic features of the situation in which the subject of the attribution finds herself. The semantics, meanwhile, is *in*sensitive to the context of utterance. (It is sensitive to the *subject's* situation, but insensitive to the ascriber's context of utterance.) This kind of theory is supposed to achieve two ends:

First, it is supposed to preserve stability of content across contexts of utterance. All utterances of 'A knows that p' express the exact same proposition, and hence, say the same. There is no variability in the proposition expressed from one context of utterance to another (assuming, of course, we have adjusted for obvious context sensitivity). That's supposed to accommodate the shared content part of our dilemma.

Sensitive Moderate Invariantism is also supposed to accommodate some kind of context sensitivity surrounding knowledge attributions: What it *takes* for A to be in the extension of 'know' (at a time t) depends on A's interests, concerns, and salient standards at t. If this is the extent of context sensitivity, then, as Hawthorne says,

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[12] We should say 'one version of Hawthorne's view' since he considers several and doesn't conclusively come down in favor of one over the others.

'the relevance of attention, interests, and stakes to the truth of knowledge ascriptions would not, in itself, force the thesis of semantic context dependence.'

Before raising objections to Sensitive Moderate Invariantism, we should emphasize that Hawthorne discusses a range of options for how to spell out subject sensitivity. He discusses various versions of the view that what is contextually salient to the subject matters. He also considers various versions of the view that the agent's 'practical environment' is relevant to the truth conditions of knowledge claims.[13] He doesn't come down firmly on one side or the other. The objections we raise below, however, do not depend on the details of his account (or if they do, they can be modified to fit any version of this kind of view).

We have two objections and three critical comments on his solution.

Objection 1

We have throughout our discussion tried to emphasize and illustrate that the puzzle is a general one: It has to do with a wide-ranging tension between intuitions we have about contextual variability of what speakers say by uttering sentences, on the one hand, and intuitions we have about content sharing across contexts, on the other. It is, of course, possible this tension could be resolved one way for 'know', another for adjectives, another for epistemic modals, another for 'true', another for moral terms, another for verbs, another for conjunctions, and so on and so on. We do, however, consider it obvious that should a general solution be available, it is to be preferred over a range of local fixes (especially when these come with all kinds of difficulties, as illustrated above). If there's evidence that an underlying misconception generates the appearance of a puzzle, and if removing that misconception resolves the perceived tension across the board, then local fixes aren't necessary. Below, we argue there is such a misconception and that it works across the board.

If we're right, then Sensitive Moderate Invariantism turns out to be not well motivated because it doesn't generalize. None of its proponents has suggested that the solution can be extended to other cases; there has been one attempt to do something related with respect to vague terms (see Graff, 2000), but the proponent of that solution does not advocate extending it to "knows" and one of the two proponents of SSI for "knows" has criticized Graff's application of the strategy. So the proponents of this strategy are in agreement that this is, at best, a local fix.[14]

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[13] He says that we maybe should allow '. . . what we might call 'practical environment' to make a difference to what one knows. We now have before us the outlines of a second mechanism that may be introduced by the sensitive moderate invariantist. The basic idea is clear enough. Insofar as it is unacceptable—and not merely because the content of the belief is irrelevant to the issues at hand—to use a belief that p as a premise in practical reasoning on a certain occasion, the belief is not a piece of knowledge at that time. Thus when offered a penny for my lottery ticket, it would be unacceptable to use the premise that I will lose the lottery as my grounds for making such a sale. So on that occasion I do not know that I will lose. Meanwhile, when you are offered life insurance, it would be unacceptable for you to use your belief that you are going to Blackpool as grounds for refusal. So on that occasion you do not know that you are going to Blackpool' (Hawthorne 2004: 176).

[14] Hawthorne does not fully endorse the view even for "knows", see ch. 4 of Hawthorne 2004.

Objection 2

SSI doesn't even resolve the tension between O1 and O2 with respect to 'knows'—i.e. it doesn't even provide a *local* fix. SSI, in effect, denies O1 without argument and provides no reconciliation between O1 and O2. Remember; for SSI there's a stable semantic content for all utterances of 'A knows that p at t', no variability from one context of utterance to another. That takes care of O1. The puzzle, however, is how the stability can be reconciled with (intuitive) variability in what is said by different utterances of 'A knows that p at t'. According to SSI, there is no variability in such utterances—they all express the same proposition—they all say the same. The theory doesn't recognize, and hence doesn't account for, the variability of what's said by such utterances. Since it doesn't recognize our puzzle it also doesn't solve it.

Here's how to see the puzzle with respect to 'knows'. 'Knows' is a **Class 3** expression (see Section 40.5.1.2 above): the sentences in which it occurs can be DIR and DSS'ed, in some contexts, but not in other contexts. SSI has no explanation of why we encounter this variability. An example to illustrate the point:

In the discussion of front loading in Section 40.5.1.3 we said that the way to undermine O2 intuitions was to present two utterances of the same sentence by focusing on the differences between context of utterance—i.e. focus on the difference in e.g. the speaker's intentions, their practical goals, their conversational contexts, and so on. When examples are so presented, we argued, you can easily trigger the intuition that the two utterances say different things, don't make the same assertion, and don't express agreement. Two such frontloaded examples;

> Naomi is taking some friends to an Italian restaurant she is familiar with; she knows the owner, she has visited on numerable occasions, latest for lunch earlier in the day. One of her friends, not familiar with this particular restaurant and worried about being stuck in a French restaurant, asks Naomi 'Do you know that it is an Italian restaurant?' Naomi answers: 'Yes, I know it's an Italian restaurant'. Her interest is just in calming her friends practical concern about ending up in a French restaurant. She has never thought about skepticism and her epistemic standards are low, adjusted to the practical issues at hand.
>
> Now consider John, a participant in a philosophical seminar, he has just learned about certain kinds of skeptical arguments, he has no practical concerns whatsoever; his epistemic standards are extremely high; he applies these standards to his friend Naomi, just as an example, and utters: 'Naomi doesn't know that it's an Italian restaurant'[15], meaning to say that she doesn't know it by these very high epistemic standards that he has adopted for this particular occasion.

When asked whether Naomi and John in, *some sense*, said different things, made different assertions, our informants are inclined to say they did. In particular, they are inclined to agree that Naomi said something like *She knows (by relatively low, practical standards) that it's an Italian Restaurant* and that John said *she does know (by high philosophical standards) that it is an Italian restaurant*. So in that sense, they might not disagree—the two utterances need not be expressions of disagreement; what Naomi said is compatible with what John said.[16] Another way to get at the intuition of variability is to ask yourself: Isn't what Naomi said, intuitively true? Isn't what John said also intuitively true? Our inclination is to say, in some sense, 'yes'. If so, their knowledge attributions must have different contents. In some sense: Naomi *counts as* knowing in the context of her utterance, but *doesn't* count as knowing in the context of John's utterance.

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[15] Obviously assume tense is the same in the two cases.

Based on such examples we conclude: two utterances of 'A knows that p at t' might express the same proposition relative to some contexts of interpretation, and different propositions relative to other contexts of interpretation. SSI can account for the first cases but not the second.

Comment 1

We now turn to another objection that relates specifically to implications of Sensitive Moderate Invariantism as a theory of knowledge attribution. As mentioned, our overarching concern is not knowledge attributions *per se*; we're interested in the general puzzle, and so a solution for 'know' is interesting only in so far as it generalizes. But to see why we doubt it generalizes, it helps to see why it fails for 'know'.

Sensitive Moderate Invariantism has the following peculiar implications:[17] When a subject matter is important to you, when it is of some kind of immediate practical significance, epistemic standards rise; the requirements for knowing something about this subject matter are 'stricter'.[18] As a result, you can end up knowing less of a subject matter, say, penguins, by paying more attention to penguin related issues or by engaging in activities where penguins are important. To wit: If you care enormously about what penguins eat, if it's an important matter in your life, then epistemic standards are high. As a result, it becomes difficult to know, e.g. that penguins eat fish. If, however, you couldn't care less about what penguins eat, then epistemic standards are low, and it is easier to fall in the extension of 'x knows that penguins eat fish'. This aspect of Sensitive Moderate Invariantism opens up a strategy for increasing knowledge, a strategy not really available to humans. If you don't know whether penguins eat fish, but want to know, you might think that the only way to become more informed is through study; you have to gather evidence, try to learn more about penguins. If Sensitive Moderate Invariantism were correct, though, you have another option: You could take a drink or shoot heroin. If as a result you care less about penguins and their eating habits (or change your practical environment in such a way that these habits become irrelevant), you would know more (of course, on the assumption that p is true). But this is not how to improve your epistemic standing!

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[16] Of course, our (i.e. C&L's) position is a bit tricky here: We're presenting these examples to you in very peculiar context, a context that, if our view is right, will affect your intuitions. We've just spent pages trying to convince you that there's a common content, and then we try to turn you around and see that there's no common content; that's bound to be dizzying for a reader and our readers probably should not fully trust their intuitions at this point. So we suggest trying out these kinds of cases in a less loaded environment at a later point.

[17] These kinds of implications are not original to us; Hawthorne mentions them, but seems to consider them reasonable bullets to bite in order to get an otherwise explanatorily powerful theory.

[18] There are many ways to spell out 'stricter' but the differences do not matter for our purposes.

Comment 2

Second, Sensitive Moderate Invariantism is inconsistent with widespread intuitions about knowledge attributions. The following seems clearly unacceptable: Suppose A cares very much about whether p is so; it matters a lot in her practical environment. Standards are high, and as a result she doesn't know that p. A is thinking about B, who has the exactly same evidence, with the sole difference being that B doesn't care as much about p-related issues. In such circumstances, A could truly say:

(7) Lucky B, she knows that p (assuming that p is true), but I don't. Not because she has better evidence than I or has done more research on p-related issues or anything like that; but just because B couldn't care less and her practical environment is one in which p doesn't matter.

This simply doesn't accord with the kinds of intuitions we have about knowledge attributions: when epistemic standards rise, you hold others to those standards as well.

These objections apply to sensitive Moderate Invariantism for 'know' specifically but we care about them because they are related to more general points about how to deal with the puzzle.

Comment 3

We earlier emphasized that content stability over time is required to make sense of various aspects of inter- and intra-personal deliberation. This presents a serious obstacle for Sensitive Moderate Invariantism. Consider the following scenario: You're about to hire A and you learn that you can't hire her unless you know she has a Ph.D. Suddenly, it becomes a pressing practical concern for you whether or not she has a Ph.D. As a result, standards are high, lots of possibilities must be ruled out in order to know her educational status. Suppose you end up concluding you do not know whether she has a Ph.D. The following is now possible:

- If it turns out she did have a Ph.D., you might have known she had one before it became a pressing issue.
- You lost that knowledge as soon as it became a pressing issue (because standards rose).
- As soon as you've decided not to hire her, it is no longer a pressing practical issue, so once again you know she has a Ph.D.

Just when it really mattered, you didn't know. Not because your evidence was any better prior to the hiring process; in fact, it might have been worse.

These kinds of implications seem to us to make a mockery of inter-personal deliberation over time (knowledge doesn't just come and go like that, contingent on what you care about) and also of third person attributions (we don't describe people as first knowing, then not knowing, then knowing again under the described circumstances).

Hawthorne might think this cost is an acceptable price to pay for an otherwise explanatorily adequate theory, but we're not sure how he's adding up the pros and cons here.

Before turning to our proposal for how to solve the puzzle, in Section 40.9, we want to consider one more failed effort.

40.8 SOLUTION 5: RELATIVISM ABOUT TRUTH

Versions of relativism recently proposed independently by Richard (2004); MacFarlane (2005) on comparative adjectives and knowledge claims, Egan/Hawthorne/Weatherson (2005) on epistemic modals, Lasersohn (2006) on predicates of personal taste, are all attempts at reconciling (O1) and (O2).

Here's how Richard introduces the problem: Suppose we can't say who's rich unless we've settled on what counts as a luxury and a necessity, and suppose this varies from person to person. This is the correlate to (O1). Richard then raises a version of our puzzle for a contextualist about 'rich'. The worry is that we can't capture disagreements across contexts. Richard says about this contextualist position:

> many cases which seem to involve disagreement over who is rich (or what is urgent or dangerous or . . .) turn out to be cases in which there is no literal disagreement. Suppose, to take an example, that Mary wins a million-dollar lottery. Didi is impressed, and remarks to a friend 'Mary's rich.' Naomi, for whom a million dollars is not really all that much, remarks in a conversation disjoint from Didi's, 'Mary is not rich at all.' It seems to most of us that Naomi is contradicting Didi. But, especially if each remark is part of a longer conversation (with Naomi assessing various people she and her friend know for wealth, Didi doing the same), *it is very plausible that the truth of their claims about wealth turns on whatever standards prevail within their conversations.* This is, in any case, part and parcel of a contextualist view of the semantics of 'rich'. *But then Naomi and Didi don't disagree,* in the sense that one asserts something which is inconsistent with what the other asserts. (Richard 2004: 218)

On the one hand, 'rich' is clearly, in some sense, context sensitive. On the other hand, we seem to assume that utterance of 'Naomi is rich' expresses the same content across contexts and that might at first glance seem inconsistent with the kind of context sensitivity exhibited by sentences containing 'rich'. Richard's solution, if we understand it right, is to account for the context sensitivity by making the truth evaluations sensitive to parameters supplied by the conversational context. These parameters are not part of what the speaker says, but part of the mechanism by which we evaluate the truth of what was said. Richard says:

> Once the contextualist accepts the banality that whoever utters 'Mary is rich' says that Mary is rich, he must use a relativized notion of truth to formulate contextualism. Contextualism about 'rich' must be formulated as the view that whether a use of 'Mary is rich' is valid—i.e. is true relative to the conversational context in which it occurs—turns upon the standards of wealth supplied by that context. (Richard 2004: 233)

In the report (i.e. 'They disagree: one thinks Mary is rich, the other does not'), Didi and Naomi disagree. So, there is something Didi affirms that Naomi denies. Still, within the confines of each woman's conversation, each use of 'is rich' is correct. So, Didi says something true when she utters 'Mary is rich' and Naomi something true when she utters the sentence's denial. This is consistent with the two disagreeing over the truth of a single claim, *if* that truth is relative, so that it may be 'true for Didi, but not for Naomi.'

Lasersohn (2006) motivates his relativism in much the same way:

> Our basic problem is that if John says 'This is fun' and Mary says 'This is not fun', it seems possible for both sentences simultaneously to be true (relative to their respective speakers), but we also want to claim that John and Mary are overtly contradicting or disagreeing with each other . . . . How can that be? All we have to do is assign words like 'fun' and 'tasty' the same content relative to different individuals, but contextually relativize the assignment of truth values to contents, so that the same content may be assigned different truth values relative to different individuals. This will allow for the possibility that two utterances express identical semantic content, but with one of them true and the other one false . . . Instead of treating the content of a sentence as a set of time-world pairs, we should treat it as a set of time of time-world-individual triples. We assume that the context will provide an individual to be used in evaluating the sentences for truth and falsity, just as it provides a time and world; hence a sentence may be true relative to John but false relative to Mary. But this will be contextual variation in truth value only; the sentence will express the same content relative to both individuals. (Lasersohn, 2006; cf., also, MacFarlane, 2005)

If we have understood their position correctly, its solution has two parts:

a. There's a stable content; it involves what Richard calls *notions*. This is what, for example, different utterances of 'Mary is rich' share; they all express the proposition *that Mary is rich*. This is intended to accommodate (O2).
b. There is also, however, variability, not in content, but in *what it takes for a proposition to be true in a context of assessment,* i.e. what it takes to be true relative to Didi's and Naomi's contexts respectively. What it takes for the proposition that these different utterances of 'Mary is rich' express to be true relative to Didi is not the same as what it takes for them to be true relative to Naomi. In this regard, (O1) is not about variability in content (in what speakers say), but rather variability in what it takes for what's said to be true relative to the speaker.

In what follows our goal is not to criticize this strategy as a theory of truth. Truth is a very big and very deep topic, not one we feel comfortable or confident making pronouncements about. We focus only on relativism as a solution to our puzzle about content. So understood, we shall argue, relativism of the form described above, fails for the very same reasons that Subject Sensitive Invariantism fails.

Two Objections to Relativism

Objection 1

In response to Sensitive Moderate Invariantism, we emphasized that a universal solution is preferable to a local fix. Relativism about Truth is not and cannot provide a universal solution to our problem. Universal relativism is internally inconsistent for familiar reasons. Plato's version of the argument against strong truth-value relativism is typically said to go like this: either the claim that truth is relative is true absolutely (i.e. true in a non-relative sense) or else it is only true relative to some framework. If it is true absolutely, all across the board, then at least one truth is not merely true relative to a framework, so this version of the claim is inconsistent. Furthermore, if we make an exception for the relativist's thesis, it is difficult to find a principled way to rule out other exceptions; what justifies stopping here? On the other hand, if the relativist's claim that truth is relative is only true relative to his framework, then it can be false in other, perhaps equally good, frameworks. And why should we care about the relativist's (perhaps rather idiosyncratic or parochial) framework (cf. MacFarlane, 2005).

The universal solution we present below in Section 40.9 is, other things being equal, preferable to this kind of local solution.

Objection 2

Above we argued that Subject Sensitive Invariantism sacrificed (O1) to save (O2). That is in effect what the relativists are doing as well. They have a stable content across contexts of utterance, i.e. different utterances of 'Naomi is rich' have the same semantic content—in that sense they say the same (they can agree and disagree, as in Richard's example). What the relativist cannot account for is the equally clear sense that two utterances of 'Naomi is rich' uttered with different standards of wealth in mind, say different things, make different claims, and cannot be used to express agreement or disagreement.

Examples should be unnecessary to provide by now, but here's a quick one, again notice the heavy front loading to get you, the reader, to focus on the differences in content:

> In C1, Naomi whose standards are very high with respect to whom she considers wealthy is thinking about Mary. Naomi doesn't think people count as rich unless they have several multi-dollar houses and apartment, servants etc. Using these standards, she utters 'Mary isn't rich', meaning to communicate that Mary doesn't live up to her exceedingly high standards for when someone is wealthy.
>
> In C2, Didi, who has rather low standards for when she considers someone wealthy, she considers someone wealthy if they own a home and a car, have some savings, don't live from pay check to pay check etc. She does not share Naomi's high standards. Using these standards, she utters 'Mary is rich', meaning to say that Mary's standards of living measures up to her rather low standards.

When presented with this kind of cases, it is very easy get informants to accept that Didi and Naomi don't disagree. They didn't contradict each other. 'Mary is rich' uttered by Naomi says something different from that sentence as uttered by Didi. The relativist cannot explain the clear intuition to the effect that there's a difference in content.[19]

40.9 SOLUTION 6: PLURALISTIC MINIMALISM

The central question guiding us throughout our discussion of the puzzle has an air of paradox: How can two utterances u_1 and u_2 of a single sentence S disagree in what they say, even if they say the same thing? The answer is surprisingly simple. It is, however, difficult to accept without relinquishing precious fundamental assumptions underlying contemporary work in semantics for natural language.

The crucial step is to relinquish what we call *Speech Act Monism.* This is the view that each utterance of a sentence says (asserts, claims, etc.) just one thing (one proposition, one thought). It is Speech Act Monism that generates even the appearance of tension between (O1) and (O2): If utterance u_1 says just one thing, e.g. p, and utterance u_2 says something else, e.g. q, and if $p \neq q$, then how could u_1 and u_2 say the same?

Here's the solution: Drop the idea that an utterance expresses one proposition, i.e. endorse a combination of what we call *Speech Act Pluralism* and *Semantic Minimalism*. (We call the combination *Pluralistic Minimalism.*)

According to Speech Act Pluralism, any utterance can be used to express a whole bunch of propositions. Accordingly, u_1 of S expresses a set of propositions, say, C1, and u_2 of S expresses a set of propositions, say, C2; and it may be that $C1 \neq C2$, i.e. they don't share the exact same members. This, however, does not prevent an overlap. If C1 and C2 *do* overlap, then there is an obvious explanation of how u_1 and u_2 can both say different things and yet say the same. When we speak of two utterances of S saying the same, we are focusing on the area of overlap, and when we speak of two utterances saying different things, we are focusing on the area of non-overlap.

More specifically, return to u_1 and u_2 of (1) by Venus Williams and Serena William's agent respectively:

(1) Serena is really smart.

u_1 was uttered in a context where Venus is focusing on Serena's intelligent play and we, reporting on what's said, are interested in what Venus had in mind (for more on the importance of the reporter's interests, see below). In consequence, we report

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[19] For further discussion of relativism and the relationship between relativism and the view we present below, see the discussion between John MacFarlane and us.

Venus as having said that Serena is a really smart tennis player. u_2, however, was uttered in a context where the focus is on athletes who negotiate great endorsement fees. We know this is what Serena's agent had in mind, and it is what the context of his utterance rendered salient, and suppose we care about what's salient in the context and what the speaker had in mind. In consequence, we report Serena's agent as having said that Serena is a really smart negotiator. Here's another fact: *both speakers said that Serena is really smart*. That is, u_1, in addition to saying Serena is a really smart tennis player, also says that Serena is really smart; u_2 in addition to saying that she is a really smart negotiator, also says that Serena is really smart. Of all the propositions expressed by u_1 and u_2, there's at least one overlap (of course, there could be more), and there is also a lot of divergence. Hence, we account for both observations (O1) and (O2).

Which part of speech act content we focus on varies from context to context. Sometimes it is the context specific content: If our interest is in what goes on in that particular context, we focus on the context specific propositions. If our interest is in the common content—that which is abstracted from the peculiarities of specific contexts, we focus on the common content (i.e. that content many utterances of the same sentence share).

40.10 CLARIFICATIONS OF PLURALISTIC MINIMALISM

In what follows, we address a range of worries an uninitiated might have about Pluralistic Minimalism. (We should mention, in passing, that we have written extensively about these issues earlier, so at certain points we will refer the reader to earlier work, but what follows will be largely self-contained.) We present our defense of Pluralistic Minimalism in the form of responses to three imagined objections.

Objection 1: 'Why on earth should I join a club who call themselves Speech Act Pluralists? Is there independent evidence for this view, or is it just some cockamamie theory you guys cobbled together to resolve the alleged puzzle?'

Speech Act Pluralism is independently motivated. Here's how we see the dialectic: There are two opposing theories about speech acts: Monism and Pluralism. Needless to say, neither is *a priori* true. It is not an analytic truth that an utterance of (1) says just one thing or more than one thing. So, we need to rely on theory neutral data. A great deal of our earlier work has been devoted to looking at how people actually describe what people say in uttering sentences. It turns out that for any one utterance there's a wide range of ways in which we can describe what was said (asserted, claimed, etc.) by that utterance. Here's an example of what we have in mind (taken from Cappelen and Lepore (2005)):

Consider this verbatim transcript of an utterance, the so-called 'Smoking Gun' utterance ('. . .' indicates pauses):

> When you get in these people, when you get these people in, say: 'Look, the problem is that this will open the whole, the whole Bay of Pigs thing, and the president just feels that,' ah, without going into the details . . . don't, don't lie to them to the extent to say there is no involvement, but just say this is sort of a comedy of errors, bizarre, without getting into it, 'the president believes that it is going to open the whole Bay of Pigs thing up again, and ah because these people are plugging for, for keeps and that they should call the FBI in and say that we wish for the country, don't go any further into this case'. Period. That's the way to put it, do it straight.

Let's reflect on what's said by this utterance. We want a naïve description of what it says—the sort of description you would give if you weren't encountering it with a philosophical axe to grind. Notice first the following:

(a) This quote is typical in that almost none of it includes a grammatical sentence. Indeed, few well-formed English sentences ever get uttered.
(b) As a result, to ascertain what's said, you must first reconstruct utterances to a point where they express thoughts. There are many ways to achieve this end, as illustrated by this quote. No one way is uniquely correct.
(c) To report on this utterance (and see how others would report on it), it obviously helps to know basic facts about it, such as who the speaker and audience are and where the utterance took place. It helps, for example, to know that the speaker was Richard Milhouse Nixon, the 37th President of the United States, that his audience was R. H. Haldeman (his Chief of Staff), that the locution 'these people' refers to one or all of CIA Director Richard Helms and his deputy, General Vernon Walters (a longtime associate of the President's), and FBI Acting Director Pat Gray, that the conversation takes place in Oval Office June 23, 1972 from 10:04–11:39 a.m. (From a transcript of the so-called Smoking Gun Tape)[20]

Observation: Such factors influence how we describe what Nixon said, asserted, claimed, ordered, etc. Our hypothesis is that there's no single way to put all of this together in order to devise a unique description of what Nixon said. There are many different ways to do it, no one of which is more correct than all others.

So, what *did* Nixon say? The current standard reports on this tape go something like this (found in any history book, innumerable contemporaneous news articles, the congressional record, etc.):

> Nixon told Haldeman to tell the CIA to tell the FBI not to pursue their investigation into the Watergate Burglary.
>
> Nixon is clearly heard telling his chief of staff, Bob Haldeman, to implement John Dean's idea that the CIA be used to pressure the FBI to limit the Watergate investigation.
>
> Nixon wanted the CIA Director Richard Helms to thwart the FBI's probe of the Watergate Burglary by saying it was a CIA operation.

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[20] It's not clear whether 'those people' refers to [CIA Director] Richard Helms, [Deputy CIA Director] Vernon Walters, [FBI Director] Pat Gray, or to all of them. Reports actually vary, and if you read the transcript carefully, no unique answer emerges and there's no reason to think there would be one even if you were able to go back in time and look into Nixon's head.

Nixon told Haldeman to tell Helms that Nixon wanted him to stop the Watergate Investigation.

Nixon told Haldeman to break the law.

These reports all attribute different sayings to the smoking gun utterance; and they constitute but a modest start. Nixon's utterance clearly said lots of other things, e.g.:

He told Haldeman to tell someone at the CIA to tell the FBI that there was a connection between the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Watergate Burglary.

He said that Haldeman should give the FBI few details about the connection between the Bay of Pigs and the Watergate Burglary.

And so on and so on.

What's crucial here (and, in general) is that our intuitions about what speakers say with their utterances are influenced by, at least, the following sorts of considerations:

(a) Facts about the Speaker's Intentions and Beliefs

These reports make assumptions about what Nixon believes, for example, that he thinks 'those people' hold certain positions and that they have certain kinds of power; he has certain beliefs about the CIA and the FBI, the legal system, etc.

(b) Facts about the Conversational Context of this Particular Utterance

The reports of what Nixon said are influenced by information about whom Nixon and Haldeman have been talking, the topic of their conversation, etc.

(c) Other Facts about the World

What's illegal (i.e. that it is a crime for the President of the United States to ask the CIA to ask the FBI to stop an investigation), that getting the CIA to talk to the FBI in certain ways constitutes undue influence, etc.

(d) Logical Relations

The most obvious examples are conjuncts of conjunctions or trivial logical implications. If Nixon said he wanted the CIA Director Richard Helms to thwart the FBI's probe of the Watergate Burglary by saying it was a CIA operation, then it follows he also said he wanted the CIA Director Richard Helms to thwart the FBI's probe of the Watergate Burglary—where the latter follows logically/semantically from the former.

(e) In light of (a)–(d), we can easily substitute co-extensive predicates and referring expressions.

Take, e.g. Haldeman. Since he was Nixon's Chief of Staff, one true report would be: 'Nixon told his Chief of Staff to break the law.

(f) There's no reason to think (a)–(e) exhaust all the factors that influence our intuitions about what speakers say.

The general point illustrated by (a)–(f) is that our intuitions about what speakers say depend on a wide range of considerations not all of which are encoded solely in the meanings of the words uttered. It is only when these considerations are combined with the meanings of the words used that it even makes sense for us to ask what an individual said with his utterance.

This is the kind of evidence and argument we use against Monism and in favor of Pluralism (for an extremely wide range of further examples, see *Insensitive Semantics*). You might remain unconvinced thinking there must be ways around these data, i.e. various ways to preserve Speech Act Monism. If so, we'll have to refer you to other work. A full-fledged defense of Pluralism goes well beyond the scope of this chapter but for some such concerns see *Insensitive Semantics*.

Objection 2: 'Suppose I concede that there's evidence for Pluralism, but how, on this view, does that accommodate the shared content observation (O2)? You speak of an overlap between different utterances of the same sentence (that's how you intend to capture the shared content observation), but how do you *guarantee* this overlap?'

Two utterances of S might express different sets of propositions. We claim that if you adjust for obviously context sensitive expressions (i.e. hold the semantic value of these stable), then these sets will have at least one proposition in common. Call this the semantic content of S, i.e. one way (not the only) to characterize the semantic content of S is as that content which all utterances of S have in common (once we adjust for obvious context sensitivity). The view that there is such a common content is *Semantic Minimalism* ('minimalism' because the contextual influence is minimal).

What's our argument for Semantic Minimalism, i.e. that there is such an overlap between different utterances of, e.g. (1)? In earlier work, we presented three kinds of arguments:

(1) Semantic Minimalism helps explain how we can share contents across contexts. If we accept that theory, we can explain why contents are not contextually trapped. If our arguments above are right, then this is our only protection against what can be called *contextual content solipsism*. Semantic Minimalism guarantees a level of content that enables speakers whose conversational, perceptual and cognitive environments are very different to agree and disagree. This inference is one of the best explanations.

(2) There's a related argument (in some sense the flip side of the last one), but it appeals more directly to intuitions: When we encounter a range of utterances of S in diverse contexts (or just one utterance in a context we are ignorant of), we're often inclined to use S to say what was said by these utterances (i.e. we DSS or DIR other speakers). When we do that, i.e. when we focus on what they all share (or what was said by a single utterance in an unknown context), we have a kind of direct access to the minimal content. It's not something we focus on (or care about) in most contexts, but when we do, it's right there and we have direct cognitive access to it. When someone asks you what A said with his utterance of (1), the obvious answer is (even if you know very little about the context that A was in) is (2):

(2) A said that Serena Williams is really smart.

This most obvious of answers provides evidence that in such circumstances we grasp minimal propositions directly.

(3) Finally, we argued that the view that there's no common content is internally inconsistent. We will not present that argument here because it requires saying much more about our opponent's position, but for an extended discussion see Chapter 9 of *Insensitive Semantics*.

Objection 3: 'In your third objection to the Similarity View (SV), you argued that since any two objects are similar in some respect or other, it follows from the SV that were we to take any utterance u by a speaker A and any proposition p, there is some respect in which *A said that p*. It also follows that in some context, it should be true to report u by uttering 'A said that p,' why doesn't the same criticism extend to your Speech Act Pluralism?'

Anyone who raises this objection against our position has not understood it. We're *not* saying that every sentence can same-say every sentence. Indeed, we are not offering, contrary to SV, a theory of same-saying. What convinced us to endorse Speech Act Pluralism are the data.

Furthermore, if there is a context in which two utterances u1 and u2 same-say each other, we are certainly *not* claiming that this relationship obtains in virtue of these two utterances expressing propositions that are similar to one another. Recall, on SV, if there is a context C in which two propositions p and q are similar, then they same-say each other. But we never once mentioned similarity as either necessary or sufficient for same-saying. To repeat: we say we have no theory for when two utterances same-say each other (and to be honest, we're doubtful there could be one, though we have no argument for that). We go with the data. In this regard: we have a no-theory theory.

Conclusion

Here are important corollaries of accepting Pluralistic Minimalism. First, a Pluralistic Minimalist must reject the Speech Act Conception of Semantics.

The Speech Act Conception of Semantics is the view that the variability in what speakers say is relevant to semantics because the goal of semantics is, roughly speaking, to account for the content of speech acts performed by utterances of sentences. So, if S is a sentence of L and S is used to say that p (to assert that p), then the semantics for L should explain how that could be. On this view, there must be a close explanatory connection (this connection can be spelled out in various ways) between the semantic content of S and the content of speech acts involving S. As a corollary, if what is said by utterances of S varies between contexts of utterance, then the semantic content of S should be context sensitive.

Pluralistic Minimalists must also reject the *Semantic Conception of Indirect Reports*, according to which If 'A said that p' is a true indirect report of an utterance of S, then the semantic content of p (as it occurs in that report) should be identical to the semantic content of S. In short, indirect reports report on semantic contents.

Here's another way to present the dialectic of this paper: the apparent tension between (O1) and (O2) arises because philosophers tend to (tacitly) accept Monism, the Speech Act Conception of Semantics and the Semantic Conception of Indirect Reports. These closely related assumptions are jointly the source of all these troubles. Of course, giving these up is not equivalent to having a positive theory. The positive theory we suggest to take their place is Pluralistic Minimalism.

Further Work

A great deal of work needs to be done in support of Pluralistic Minimalism before it can be called a full-fledged theory. Here are some challenges we conceive of as further work:

a. How is speech act content determined?
b. Can there be a systematic theory of speech act content?
c. What is the nature of minimal semantic propositions? How do we determine what the minimal content is?
d. Above we claimed that there are propositions such as the proposition that Serena is smart. Can anything interesting or informative be said about such propositions?
e. What constraints does the semantic content put on the speech act content?
f. Above we have talked about how interpreters focus sometimes on one aspect of the speech act content, sometimes on another. How does that focusing take place and how do we shift focus?

In other works, we have addressed some of these concerns, but we see them as essentially open-ended areas of further research.

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Queries in Chapter 40

Q1. Correction is not clear. Kindly clarify?
Q2. Correction is not clear. Kindly clarify?
Q3. Correction is not clear. Kindly check and confimred this correction
Q4. Correction is not clear. Please clarify?