1 A Pragmatic Metavocabulary

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1.1 Semantic and Pragmatic Construals of a Fundamental Bipolarity

The Fregean semantic tradition treats the distinction between *truth* and *falsity* as conceptually fundamental. This is not to say that these notions need be taken to be conceptually primitive, in the sense of not being further analyzable—though that was Frege's own view. But it is characteristic of this tradition to understand specifically *semantic* significance in terms of the difference something makes, its relevance to, possession of one or the other of these two "truth-values." The basic form of semantic meaningfulness is truth evaluability.

The two truth-values are not merely different (as **square** and **red** are), but exclusively different (as **square** and **circular** are). In the central, defining cases, possessing the one truth-value rules out possessing the other. It is impossible for anything to be both *true* and *false*. Further, the two truth-values are thought of as *opposites*. Appealing to an older tradition, we could say that "true" and "false" express Aristotelian contradictories rather than merely contraries. However, at least for the Fregeans, the opposition between truth and falsity is conceptually more basic than, and presupposed by, the distinction between contradictories and contraries. Much, much later in the order of explanation, sophisticated semantic theories might find reasons to relax these structural constraints for special cases, and countenance truth-value gluts and gaps: truth-evaluable items of which one says that they are either both true and false or neither true nor false. But the intelligibility of such late-coming subtleties is understood to be rooted in and parasitic on the more basic cases where what is truth evaluable takes one and only one of the two values. The home language-game of "truth-value" talk is built on and builds in both the distinction and the modally robust opposition between truth and falsity.

This familiar and influential philosophical tradition that has *semantic bivalence*, in a broad sense, as one of its guiding ideas is further characterized by its commitment to an order of explanation that seeks

to understand *meaning* ultimately in terms of truth-values. The purest, paradigmatic application, and a strong confirmation of the power of this approach, was provided early on by the clear, elegant, arbitrarily recursively extensible, bivalent truth-functional semantics it turned out to make possible for classical (Boolean) sentential *logical* vocabulary. Ever since, the first criterion of adequacy for a candidate semantics has been its capacity to provide a sound and complete specification of specifically logical consequence relations.

This bivalent semantic structure has an analogue on the side of pragmatics: that is, in theories of the *use* of linguistic locutions, rather than of the *meanings* or *contents* those locutions express. Here the starting point is *acts*, things speakers and thinkers can *do*, and the practical attitudes those acts express—in a different, pragmatic rather than semantic, sense of "express." The fundamental acts are *affirmation* and *denial*, expressing practical attitudes of *acceptance* and *rejection* (whether overtly and publicly, or covertly and quietly).

The acts expressing attitudes of acceptance and rejection can be as simple as saying "yes" or "no" in response to a claim or a question. These forms of affirmation and denial underscore that an essential element of the attitudes of acceptance and rejection is their opposite valence, their exclusion of one another. In the central, defining cases, one may say either "yes" or "no," but not both. The intelligibility of the cases where we do want to affirm and deny, for instance by saying "yes and no," is parasitic on the more basic cases where the opposition holds. Affirmations and denials count as *communicating information* only when the attitudes they express are treated as ruling one another out.

The sense of exclusion that applies to practical acts and attitudes is normative. One *ought* not to perform speech acts that would express acceptance and rejection of the very same claimable—even if one *could* do so. The deontic flavor of the modality of exclusion relating practical attitudes of acceptance and rejection on the side of pragmatics contrasts with the alethic flavor of the modality of the exclusion relating truth and falsity on the side of semantics. That exclusion is understood in terms of the *impossibility* (in the central, defining cases) of the very same truth-evaluable item being both true and false.

The semantic and pragmatic oppositions are linked by the possibility of understanding the practical attitude of accepting as *taking* (to be) *true*, and the practical attitude of rejecting as *taking* (to be) *false*. Such an identification is made possible by the fact that tokenings of declarative sentences can be understood as expressing both what is semantically truth-evaluable and what one can pragmatically accept or reject (affirm or deny, agree or disagree with, assent to or dissent from, say "Yea" or "Nay" to). Indeed, declarative sentences can be functionally specified just as what

can play both these roles. So construed, sentential lexical items are the syntactic glue that binds the semantic and pragmatic aspects of discursive practice. Together, these three form what we might call the "apophantic triad" of declarative sentences (syntactic characterization) expressing what is both evaluable as true/false (semantic characterization) and toward which one can adopt practical attitudes of acceptance/rejection (pragmatic characterization).

That those attitudes can be thought of as truth assessments or evaluations—that acceptance can be understood as taking true and rejection as taking false what is expressed by declarative sentences—opens up the possibility in principle of two orders of explanation. The semantics-to-pragmatics order of explanation would begin with a prior grasp of the concepts of truth and falsity and elaborate from that an account of what one needed to *do* to count thereby as practically *taking* or *treating* what is expressed by a declarative sentence *as* true or false, thereby accepting or rejecting it. (A potential candidate on the side of acceptance might include: using it as a premise for inferences, including practical ones issuing in intentional doings.) The pragmatics-to-semantics order of explanation would begin with a prior grasp of the concepts of acceptance and rejection and elaborate from that an account of what property one is thereby practically taking or treating what is expressed by a declarative sentence *as*. (A potential candidate on the side of truth might include: whatever is preserved by good inferences.) If neither of these explanatory strategies seems feasible (or attractive), one might treat the semantic and pragmatic dimensions of discursive practice as explanatorily coeval, and explain why they line up structurally as they do: true is to false semantically as acceptance is to rejection pragmatically.

How one understands these relations is a matter of some philosophical significance. For the opposition between truth and falsehood can be understood as a matter of how things are in the objective world one is talking or thinking *about*: how it is with the represent*ed*s one is representing in thought and talk. In contrast, the opposition between acceptance and rejection applies to how one represents things to be, that is, to the subjective side of the activity of represent*ing*. Insofar as we are interested in how these are related to one another, we should be interested in the structural *apophantic bipolarity* that shows up in the two interrelated species of the *semantic bivalence* of true and false and the *pragmatic dimorphism* of acceptance and rejection. Both, we have observed, are related by a modally robust kind of incompatibility. The semantic distinction of truth-values is articulated by the alethic *impossibility* of the same truth-evaluable being both true and false (in the same situation and at the same time). The pragmatic distinction of practical doxastic attitudes is articulated by the deontic *impropriety* of

the same claimable being both accepted and rejected (by the same subject at the same time). In either case, the *opposition* semantically between true/false and pragmatically between acceptance/rejection is crucial to one's understanding of thought and talk. The *division* into ways the world could be or opposing attitudes one could take to it is fundamental to either approach. Even if we want to allow qualifications around the edges, it is an essential element of the basic picture that in central cases the values or attitudes *exclude* one another.

The story just sketched is intended as a persuasive redescription of familiar ideas. The particular shape it takes serves two purposes within our larger story. To begin with, it provides the background for the pragmatics-first order of explanation elaborated in the rest of this chapter. More deeply, it sets the stage for what we take to be one of the most philosophically resonant and illuminating technical results that we have to report. This is the construction of a detailed isomorphism between a version of Kit Fine's model-theoretic hyperintensional truth-maker semantics and the version elaborated here of a bilateral normative pragmatics inspired by the work of Greg Restall and David Ripley. It is the topic of Chapter Four, at the heart of this book. The new way of looking at the relations between semantics and pragmatics (in our usage, the study of the meanings of linguistic expressions and the study of their use) that it offers sheds new light on the relations between representational conceptual content, the worldly states represented by such contents, and the activities that amount to representing them. It also makes visible a profound connection between what is expressed by the use of alethic modal vocabulary in (the right kind of) semantic theories and what is expressed by the use of deontic normative vocabulary in (the right kind of) pragmatic theories.

It might be noticed that the story told so far about semantic values of truth and falsity and practical attitudes of acceptance and rejection has not mentioned *negation*—and this might seem a culpable omission. After all, isn't the falsity of a claimable-believable-thinkable (what is expressed by a declarative sentence) just the truth of its negation? Isn't rejection or denial of it just acceptance or affirmation of its negation? Indeed it is. And large swathes of the philosophical tradition have succumbed to the temptation to bring negation into the story at the ground-level. But we will be rewarded by exploring a direction of explanation that understands negation in terms of the relations between the semantic distinction between truth and falsity and the pragmatic distinction between acceptance and rejection, rather than the other way around. That is the essence of the *logical expressivist* approach to demarcating logical vocabulary and concepts, which will be explained and motivated beginning in this chapter and the next, and then implemented in detail in Chapter Three. In accordance with that strategy, we proceed by considering some important features of the structure of

reasons and reasoning that can be made visible in advance of introducing logical vocabulary and concepts.

1.2 Reasons and Reason Relations: Symmetries and Asymmetries

Understanding the pragmatic attitudes (acceptance/rejection) and the semantic values (true/false) as related by the principle that acceptance is taking-true and rejection is taking-false is made attractive by the fact that it seems that *what is* accepted or rejected and *what is* true or false are the *same kinds* of things. What one can *take* true is what can *be* true. Very austere theories might have only *sentences* as what take truth-values and are accepted or rejected. (Quine is an example of such principled austerity.) When introducing the point above, though, it seemed natural to talk about what is true or false and what can be accepted or rejected rather in terms of what is *expressed* by declarative sentences. The thought is that the sentences themselves are candidates for semantic evaluation and pragmatic endorsement only at one remove, in virtue of what they express. The sentences are understood as expressive vehicles for what is in the primary sense truth-evaluable and affirmable or deniable: the object of pragmatic attitudes.

Why introduce this additional complicating factor? Because different sentences get truth-valued together, and accepted or rejected together, across a variety of situations. I say "I am confused on this point," and you say "You are confused on this point," or "Brandom is confused on this point." At noon I say "It is now noon," and 10 minutes later I say "It was noon then (when I last said something)." Ludwig wrote "Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen," and I say "About that of which one cannot speak, one must remain silent." When properly understood, the sentences (tokenings in the first two examples and types in the third) in these pairs stand or fall together, semantically and pragmatically. In this sense, sentences stand in *samesaying* relations to one another. This observation is the origin of the idea that what is evaluated semantically and pragmatically is what is *shared* by the sentences that belong to the same samesaying equivalence class. That is what invites us to think of those sentences as all *expressing* a common *content*. That expressive relation to a common content is understood as what determines that declarative sentence tokenings, or even types, *are* samesayings—that they stand in the samesaying relation to one another.

There is another sort of covariation of truth-evaluations implicit in grouping sentences into samesaying equivalence classes accordingly as they get the same semantic truth-evaluation in the same situations. For we can look at grouping those situations or circumstances into equivalence classes accordingly as they yield the *same* truth-evaluation for all the sentences of

some samesaying class. This is the origin of the idea of truth *conditions*, or of truth-makers (dually, falsifiers) associated with the contents expressed by the sentences of that samesaying class. This assimilation is not in the first instance of sentences, but of worldly states or situations in virtue of which (samesaying equivalence classes of) sentences are true or false. The work of the vague Scholastic metaphor "in virtue of which" in this claim is sometimes done by talk of what *makes* (samesaying equivalence classes of) sentences true or false. The more concrete metaphor immediately requires a qualifying commentary to the effect that the sense of "making" appealed to is not in general the *causal* sense of a temporal process that yields a result or effects a change. Moving in the other direction, the metaphor can be emptied out to the abstract form of what "determines" truth-values that invokes nothing more than a function in the mathematical sense, whose values (for some worldly arguments) are truth-values. In between is assertion of a modally robust covariation, distinguished by its support of subjunctive conditionals of the form "If the worldly situation *were* (or had been) thus-and-so, the (samesaying equivalence class of) sentences *would be* (or would have been) true (respectively: false)."

We might use the term "truth conditions" generically for the equivalence classes of worldly items playing this semantic explanatory role with respect to the samesaying equivalence classes of declarative sentences (tokenings and types). Some conceptions of truth conditions appeal to how it is with the worldly items the sentences (or the contents they express) are understood to be *about* (represent, denote, or refer to). On other conceptions, what makes sentences true are thought of as *facts*. (This is a non-Fregean sense of "fact," since in his usage a fact just is a thought—thinkable—that is true, not what *makes* it true or "corresponds to it," in any sense.) One form broadly truth conditional approaches to semantics can take is to construe the truth conditions of sentences as *intensions*: functions from indices to truth-values, thought of as the extensions of sentences. The worldly items that serve as arguments for such intension functions, and hence are assimilated as truth-makers or falsifiers of sentences, can be complete possible worlds or more fragmentary states or situations.

Thus far the emphasis has been on the structural homologies between talk of paired truth-values true and false in a semantic metavocabulary and talk of paired practical attitudes of acceptance and rejection in a pragmatic metavocabulary. There are structurally similar reasons to look for something in addition to sentences on the side not of what *is* true/false or accepted/rejected, but what in some sense *makes* (what is expressed by) declarative sentences true or false and *makes* attitudes of acceptance or rejection appropriate or correct. There is a specifically semantic sense of correctness of acceptance/rejection that can just be read off of evaluations

of truth and falsity, via the principle that accepting is taking-true and rejecting is taking-false. Acceptance is *semantically* correct just in case what is taken-true is true, and rejection is semantically correct just in case what is taken-false is false. And this non-causal, non-processual sense of "makes correct" can be expressed nonmetaphorically by a set of subjunctive conditionals: if the claim *were* true (its truth-conditions *were* satisfied), then acceptance *would* be semantically correct.

But there is another sense of "correctness" that applies to discursive practices, which confers on some acts and attitudes the practical significance of accepting or rejecting claimables (truth-evaluables) expressed by (what thereby count syntactically as) declarative sentences. It concerns *justification*, rather than truth. This is a still-normative notion of correctness that is neither equivalent to the semantic one nor reducible to mere matter-of-factual identification of the psychological causal antecedents of actual adoption of practical attitudes of acceptance and rejection: what makes practitioners adopt attitudes of acceptance or rejection in the sense of *causing* them to adopt those attitudes, or the processes by which they do. It is a matter, rather, of the *reasons* interlocutors have for the attitudes of acceptance and rejection they adopt and express (in a pragmatic, rather than semantic sense) in their acts of affirmation and denial.

Appeals to the reasons to accept and reasons to reject various claimables that are available to discursive practitioners can play explanatory-explicative roles that are analogous in some important ways to the roles played by appeals to intensions and truth conditions. It is clear that there will be important structural disanalogies as well. For the reasons available to an interlocutor might justify neither acceptance nor rejection of some claimable, and one might have both some reasons to accept and some reasons to reject some (other) claimable.

We began by pointing to an analogy between the traditional semantic extensions of declarative sentences, the two basic truth-values, on the one hand, and the two fundamental pragmatic acts and attitudes articulating the use of such sentences, acceptance and rejection (practically *taking*-true and *taking*-false), on the other. The possibility is now being raised of extending that analogy from the extensional to the intensional, by looking at the *reasons* interlocutors can have to adopt practical attitudes of acceptance and rejection. The first step on the path to elaborating pragmatics by analogy to the way semantic intensions are elaborated from merely extensional truth-values is firmly to distinguish practices of reason*ing* from reason *relations*. This is to distinguish reasons *to* do something—adopt an attitude or perform an act, accept or reject—from reasons *for* and *against* claimables (what is expressed by declarative sentences in the sense of what can be accepted or rejected).

Gilbert Harman (1984) vividly illuminates the required distinction as part of his argument for the initially shocking claim that there are no rules of deductive reasoning. Paraphrased in the idiom used here, he argues that if there were, presumably a paradigm would be the rule that if you accept p and accept $p \rightarrow q$, then you have decisive, deductively good reasons to accept q. So in those circumstances, you ought to do so. But, he points out, that would be a terrible rule. You might have much better reasons to reject q than you have to accept p or $p \rightarrow q$. In that case, you should reject one of them. Acceptance of conditionals can be exploited in reasoning either by *modus ponens*, or, equally validly, contrapositively by *modus tollens*.

What deductive logic directly supplies is reason *relations*. They tell us that some claimables provide reasons for and against others. Those relations are indeed relevant to practices of reason*ing*, but only indirectly. They constrain but do not direct the drawing of conclusions, the adoption of some doxastic attitudes as justified by the adoption of others. The fact that p and $p \rightarrow q$ stand in the relation of *implication* to q tells us that one *ought not* accept p and $p \rightarrow q$ and reject q. (We will be normatively "out of bounds" if we do.) But it does not tell us what to *do* should we find ourselves with those attitudes—which one or more of them we should change. The fact that p and $\neg p$ stand in the relation of *incompatibility* (here, formal incompatibility: inconsistency) tells us that we ought not to accept both. But again, it does not tell us what to do in such a situation—which attitude we should give up.

Harman is concerned with the role of specifically *logical* reason relations. But claimables (acceptable/rejectables) expressed by sentences that contain no logical vocabulary also stand to one another in relations of implication and incompatibility. (Following Wilfrid Sellars, we may call these *material* reason relations.) "Plane figure A is square" implies "Plane figure A is polygonal." So one ought not to accept the first and reject the second. "Plane figure A is square" is incompatible with "Plane figure A is circular." So one ought not accept both. Nested kinds support implications: "Coda is a dog" implies "Coda is a mammal," which implies "Coda is a vertebrate," and so on. And contrary properties support incompatibilities: "Coda is a mammal" and "Coda is a reptile," "Monochromatic figure A is green," and "Monochromatic figure A is red," and so on.

Harman argues that from relations of implication and incompatibility we cannot directly read off which acceptances and rejections give us reasons to accept and reject other claimables. We might, however, hope to be able to go the other way around. This would be to read off relations of implication and incompatibility between claimables from how some attitudes provide reasons to adopt other attitudes, via the non-determinative normative constraints that the reason relations impose on rationally admissible changes of attitudes. Pursuing this order of explanation would take us from

practices of giving and assessing reasons to accept and reject the claimables expressed by declarative sentences to reason relations of implication and incompatibility that those claimables stand in to one another. The aspiration would then be to understand those claimable contents—what can be accepted or rejected in reasoning—in terms of the reason relations they stand in to one another.

One way to begin is to take it that

- If accepting *A* functions practically as a reason to accept *B*, then *A* provides a reason for *B*, and
- If accepting *A* functions practically as a reason to reject *B*, then *A* provides a reason against *B*.

As the next step, we can then think of *implication* relations as codifying reasons *for* and *incompatibility* relations as codifying reasons *against*.

The idea is to start with practices of reasoning, in the sense of practices of giving reasons that entitle one to attitudes of accepting and rejecting claims (manifested in acts of asserting and denying them). We can think of a dialogical situation, where those who accept or reject a claim can be challenged to defend that attitude, to *justify* it by offering *reasons* to accept or reject it. These practices of asking for and offering reasons *to* do something, to accept or reject a claim (claimable), must respect reason relations among claimables according to which some of them provide reasons *for* and reasons *against* others. These we understand as relations of material implication and incompatibility. What stand in *these* relations are not acts or attitudes, but claimable contents: what one can accept or reject (whether reasonably or not, depending on what reasons *to* adopt those attitudes one can offer).

We gestured earlier at theoretical reasons to think that reasoning practices must include the possibility of offering and assessing reasons to accept. This is to rule out the ultimate intelligibility of purely *skeptical* reasoning practices: practices that permit the adoption and justification only of attitudes of *rejection*. (The challenge of making sense of first-person practical reasoning, practical deliberation, was offered as a suggestive case in point.) In the present context, any such considerations provide reasons to think that reason *relations* must include *implications*, which codify reasons *for*. Reasons to think that anything intelligible as reasoning practices must also include the possibility of offering and assessing reasons to *reject* are not far to seek. These would deny the ultimate intelligibility of purely *dogmatic* reasoning practices: practices that permit the adoption and justification only of attitudes of *acceptance*. In the present context, any such considerations provide reasons to think that reason *relations* must include *incompatibilities*, which codify reasons *against*.

In a wonderful essay called "Why 'Not'?," Huw Price (1990) considers the practical deficiencies of what we are calling "purely dogmatic" reason-giving practices. He imagines "ideological positivists," who do not have a way of denying or rejecting a claim. They accordingly lack any practical acknowledgment of the *incompatibility* of two claims. (It will follow that in their logic they have no way of *negating* a claim—hence the issue of his title.) He illustrates why such practices wouldn't work with a nice dialogue:

> Me: 'Fred is in the kitchen.' (Sets off for kitchen.)
> You: 'Wait! Fred is in the garden.'
> Me: 'I see. But he is in the kitchen, so I'll go there.' (Sets off.)
> You: 'You lack understanding. The kitchen is Fred-free.'
> Me: 'Is it really? But Fred's in it, and that's the important thing.'
> (Leaves for kitchen.) (Price, 1990, 224)

Unless the claims we accept can *exclude* some other acceptances, they can't guide our actions. The essential conceptual starting-point of Shannon information theory—well upstream of the issue of how to *quantify* information—is the idea that if a message does not exclude some alternatives that were previously open, it conveys no information at all. We would learn *nothing* practically from finding out that there are reasons *for* someone to accept a claim—say, "Fred is in the garden,"—unless those same considerations can serve also as reasons *against* accepting some other claims—"Fred is in the kitchen,"—which accordingly count as *incompatible* with the original claim. That means that the very same claim that is a reason *for* one commitment must also be a reason *against* some others. Not only must it be possible to accept or to reject any claimable, in addition, adopting either of those attitudes towards a claimable must be able to serve *both* as a reason to *accept* some further claimables (a reason *for* them), and as a reason to *reject* some other claimables (a reason *against* them). What can be accepted or rejected must stand both in relations of implication and in relations of incompatibility. A discursive practice cannot be intelligible as articulated by one sort of reason relation unless it is intelligible as articulated by the other as well.

We have argued that what can be accepted must be capable of being rejected, and what can be rejected must be capable of being accepted, and that what can serve as a *reason to* accept some acceptable/rejectable must be capable of serving as a reason *to* reject other acceptables/rejectables, and *vice versa*. We have accepted Harman's argument that one must distinguish between norms governing conditional practical attitudes of acceptance/rejection and the reason *relations* that constrain, but do not determine those norms. As a result, we have argued, one must understand what can be accepted or rejected as standing in *both* sorts

of reason relations: *implications*, codifying reason-*for* relations, and *incompatibilities*, codifying reason-*against* relations. All of this is a way of implementing the strategy of appealing to practical attitudes of accepting and rejecting what is expressed by sentences in order to understand the acceptable/rejectable *contents* expressed by declarative sentences by looking first to *reasons* other attitudes provide to accept or reject. The connection permitting this transition is supplied by the principle that a reason *to* accept (adopt that attitude) is governed by a relation between reasons *for* the content or object of that attitude (what is accepted), and that a reason *to* reject (adopt that attitude) is governed by a relation between reasons *against* the content or object of that attitude (what is rejected).

In this way we move from the idea of practical attitudes providing reasons *to do* something (adopt other attitudes) to relations of implication and incompatibility (reasons for and against) relating what can now be understood as what those attitudes are attitudes towards. It is an explanatory advance from *pragmatics*, studying what one is doing in adopting discursive attitudes, to *semantics*, studying the contents of those attitudes. Those contents are now thought of as nodes in a network of relations of implication and incompatibility.

To say that a set Γ of acceptables/rejectables *implies* acceptable/rejectable A, we can write "$\Gamma \mathrel{|\!\sim} A$." Use of the "snake turnstile" rather than the more familiar double turnstile $\models$ of semantic consequence or the single turnstile $\vdash$ of derivability reminds us that we are expressing *material* implications, not *logical* implications. (An implication is logically good in case it meets two conditions: i) it is materially good, and ii) its material goodness is robust under arbitrary uniform substitution of nonlogical vocabulary for nonlogical vocabulary.) To say that a set of acceptables/rejectables is *incompatible* with acceptable/rejectable A, we can write "$\Gamma \# A$." (For our purposes here it suffices to stick to the more familiar and intuitive single-succedent notation. We'll have something to say later about the multisuccedent analogues.)

So far the discussion of the attitudes of acceptance and rejection and (so) of reasons-for and reasons-against in the form of implications and incompatibilities has been reasonably even-handed. The picture has been symmetrical. There is a substantial structural asymmetry between the two kinds of reason relation however. Implication is not in general a symmetric relation. If, possibly in the context of Γ, A implies B, it does not at all follow that in the same context B implies A. $\Gamma, A \mathrel{|\!\sim} B$ does not entail $\Gamma, B \mathrel{|\!\sim} A$. "Pedro is a donkey" implies "Pedro is a mammal," but not *vice versa*. By contrast, incompatibility is *de jure* symmetric. $\Gamma, A \# B$ *does* entail $\Gamma, B \# A$. "Oscar is an octopus" is incompatible with (a decisive reason against, a dispositive reason to reject) "Oscar is a mammal," and "Oscar

is a mammal" is incompatible with (a decisive reason against, a dispositive reason to reject) "Oscar is an octopus."

We can ask: why is it that one reason relation is symmetric and the other not? Must it be so? What defect would a discursive practice have if it did not exhibit this structural asymmetry between the two kinds of reason relation? And if there must be such a structural asymmetry, is it necessary that it be reasons *for* (codified in implications) that are nonsymmetric and reasons *against* (codified in incompatibilities) that are symmetric? Is it so much as intelligible that for some discursive practices it should be the other way around?

In *Making It Explicit* Brandom (1994) explicated discursive practice in a normative pragmatic metavocabulary of *commitment* and *entitlement* to commitments—a framework whose rationale we shall return to in the next section, as part of an ongoing attempt properly to understand and articulate the "ought" in "thought." In our favored deontic terms, one understands what it is for *A* to be incompatible with *B* as commitment to *A* precluding entitlement to *B*. It is not that it is *impossible* to commit oneself to *B* by asserting it even though one is already committed to *A*. It is just that if one does, one has foregone the possibility of having the normative status of entitlement to *B*. Other interlocutors who are aware of the incompatibility will not treat one as justified in claiming *B*, as having an entitlement to it that might be inherited by others testimonially, for instance. There is much to recommend such an understanding. But it is at least not obvious on such an analysis why the fact that commitment to *A* precludes entitlement to *B* should entail that commitment to *B* precludes entitlement to *A*. It seems possible that these could come apart, that we should keep separate sets of books on whether commitment to *A* precludes entitlement to *B* and whether commitment to *B* precludes entitlement to *A*. But we don't find examples like this in the wild. Why not?

At the end of Section 1.3, we will offer our answer to this question. The argument is a pragmatic one, appealing to dialogic features of practices of making claims and giving and asking for reasons for them. That such an argument is available only from a pragmatic point of view—only considering the essential structure of this fundamental reason relation in the context of practices in which it articulates practical standards for the assessment of the normative significance of performances—is part of what recommends a pragmatics-first order of explanation. In the next section, we assemble some additional conceptual raw materials that are needed to mount that larger argument. But first, an objection from a contrary logic-first (what we'll call a "logicist") order of explanation should be considered.

It might seem that this issue about the symmetry of incompatibility is wholly an artifact of the pragmatics-first order of explanation pursued

here, and that it is spurious, so that its arising at all counts substantially against that way of proceeding. For the traditional semantic theorist who treats logical vocabulary as available at the explanatory ground-level has a quick answer to the question about the rationale of the symmetry of incompatibility. To say that p and q are incompatible is to say that $p \rightarrow \neg q$. That is truth-functionally equivalent to $\neg(p \wedge q)$ and to $\neg p \vee \neg q$, which are symmetric because conjunction and disjunction are. So from a truth-functional perspective, $p \rightarrow \neg q$ if and only if $q \rightarrow \neg p$. That is just the symmetry of incompatibility, which we can codify in the Sheffer stroke.

Doesn't that analysis answer the question asked and settle the issue raised about the symmetry of incompatibility? It certainly shows that the symmetry of incompatibility is built deeply into semantic bivalence. So *if* the truth-functional connectives are the right way to codify and express material incompatibility, then it is symmetric. But such connectives are the right way to represent this reason relation *only if* material incompatibility, like logical inconsistency, is symmetric. It does in fact seem to be, which is a point in favor of the bivalent logical semantic analysis. But that analysis presupposes the symmetry of incompatibility, rather than explaining it—at least from the pragmatic point of view. We could say "So much the worse for the pragmatics-first order of explanation." But if we dig deeper, we can find a satisfying normative pragmatic explanation for the necessity of the symmetry of incompatibility. The invisibility of the question from the bivalent semantic logical point of view then must count against that order of explanation.

One mark of that invisibility, or better, technique for achieving it, is notational. In Gentzen-style sequent calculus formulations of reason relations, there is no separate sign for the relation of incompatibility. Incompatibilities are notationally assimilated to implications. To say that Γ is incompatible with A (what we are expressing by "$\Gamma \# A$"), we write something like "$\Gamma, A \mid\sim$ " (notice the empty right side). This attributes a property, call it "incoherence" to everything on the left of the turnstile. This notation obviously builds in the symmetry of incompatibility, since "$\Gamma, A, B \mid\sim$ " says *both* that, in the context of Γ, B is incompatible with A *and* that, in the context of Γ, A is incompatible with B (and similarly for any element of Γ). It is a measure of the success of this notational sleight-of-hand in distracting from and hiding the commitment to the symmetry of incompatibility that Gentzen, who basically agrees with Tarski about the structural properties of logical consequence relations (even though he uses lists of sentences where Tarski uses sets), does not treat the symmetry of incompatibility as one of his structural principles of reason relations. He does not enumerate it alongside monotonicity and transitivity (his "Thinning" and "Cut"). This substantial structural commitment is invisible to him as a distinct issue. (He builds it into the structural

principle of "Permutation" as applied to the premises of the sequents with empty right-hand sides that he uses to encode incompatibilities.) A related issue, further downstream, is that even logicians prepared to relax the monotonicity requirement on consequence or implication relations typically do not—and some approaches, for instance in terms of defaults, cannot—accommodate also the possibility of nonmonotonic incompatibility relations.

1.3 Bilateral Pragmatic Renderings of Reason Relations

We began by contrasting a *semantic* order of explanation, whose key conception is a distinction between two truth-values, true and false, with a *pragmatic* order of explanation, whose key conception is a distinction between two practical attitudes, acceptance and rejection (corresponding to acts of assertion and denial). In both cases there is a need to postulate something beyond declarative sentences, something that is in some sense *expressed by* such sentences, that is what is in the first instance true or false, accepted or rejected: the bearers of the truth-values and the objects of the doxastic attitudes. A traditional semantic approach is to understand propositional contents as intensions: functions from a set of arguments to truth-values. We have been introducing an alternate approach, within the pragmatic order of explanation. It looks instead to understand the propositional contents expressed by declarative sentences in terms of *reasons* interlocutors can have to adopt the basic attitudes of doxastic acceptance and rejection.

The idea is that the practices within which acts and dispositions to act acquire the practical significance of doxastic acceptance and rejection are essentially, and not just accidentally, practices in which it is appropriate to ask for *reasons entitling* one to or *justifying* one in accepting or rejecting. We may use the term "claimable" as shorthand for "acceptable or rejectable" and (so) "assertible or deniable"—taking it that it is the *same* kind of thing that can be accepted (taken-true) that can be rejected (taken-false) and *vice versa*, just as it is the same kind of thing that can be true that can be false. (That it is the same kind of thing that can be both true or false, on the semantic side, and accepted or rejected, on the pragmatic side, is a further, potentially more controversial commitment.) Then the thought is that practices of accepting and rejecting, asserting and denying, are always also practices that include defending and challenging claimables, by offering reasons to accept or to reject them. Of course we can think of species of acceptance and rejection that are not like this. Voters might express their acceptance or rejection of a proposal by ticking one or the other of two boxes, with the question of their *reasons* for doing so not being at issue (at any rate at for this purely voluntarist phase of

the political process). But it seems clear that in order to understand *what* those voters are accepting/rejecting, we need to look beyond this aspect of their practices. The suggestion is that for this purpose it might be necessary (and perhaps even sufficient) to look to what would count as reasons to accept or reject the proposals they are voting on (and perhaps, what further acceptances and rejections the attitudes expressed by voting one way or another would provide reasons for).

We invoked an argument made by Gil Harman to point out the need to distinguish norm-governed practices of reason*ing*—*doing* something, taking up stances or positions, making moves to and from them, and giving reasons for and against them—from reason *relations* among the claimables that define those positions (nodes in the network of relations) and license those moves. The practices consist of making claims (asserting and denying claimables), and defending and challenging them by offering reasons to accept or reject them. Offering such a reason is just accepting or rejecting some other claimables (acceptables/rejectables), which stand in the right reason-relations to the one being defended or challenged. Those reason-relations are *implication* and *incompatibility*, relations in which some claimables serve as reasons for or against other claimables, respectively. The connection between offering reasons *to* do something, accept or reject, and the relations of being a reason for or a reason against a claimable consists, to begin with, in reasons *to* accept being reasons *for* the claimable accepted (implying it) and reasons *to* reject being reasons *against* the claimable being rejected (being incompatible with it). The culmination of this pragmatic order of explanation would be an account of claimables—the propositional contents that are expressed by declarative sentences and can be accepted or rejected—in terms of the role the sentences that express them play in reason relations of implication and incompatibility. What is envisaged is a pragmatic route to a kind of semantics, in the sense of an account of propositional contents (claimables).

Before considering that final step, in order properly to understand relations of implication and incompatibility (what is expressed by the snake and hash turnstiles in metalinguistic statements of the form "$\Gamma \mathrel{|\!\sim} A$" and "$\Gamma \# A$") we must look more closely at the reasoning practices that they codify. For in the context of the pragmatic order of explanation being considered, the only grip we have on these relations is the role they play in practices of defending and challenging claims, by giving reasons to accept or reject them. Here there are two main points that we would like to argue for. The first point is that to be intelligible as practices of reasoning, in the sense of accepting and rejecting claimables and defending and challenging those stances with reasons for and against them, the participants in such practices must be understood as keeping track of two different normative statuses: the kind of *commitment* one undertakes or

acknowledges in accepting or rejecting a claimable by asserting or denying a sentence expressing it, and the sort of *entitlement* to that status or practical attitude that is at issue when *reasons* are offered for or against it. The second point is that there is an important dimension along which these two flavors of normative status have quite different structures. The basis on which commitments are attributed is atomistic, while the basis on which entitlements are assessed is holistic.

As to the first point, we can begin with the observation that accepting or rejecting a claimable, paradigmatically by asserting or denying it, is taking a stand on it, adopting a stance towards it. It is committing oneself with respect to it, in the way one would by saying "Yea" or "Nay" to it in response to a suitable yes/no question. On the side of uptake, what some other practitioner needs to be able practically to discriminate in order to count as understanding the speech act is *that* the speaker has committed herself (performed a committive act, expressed a doxastic attitude), *how* she has committed herself (which kind of attitude she has adopted and expressed: acceptance or rejection, a positive or a negative commitment), and *to what* she has committed herself (toward which claimable she has adopted a doxastic attitude by asserting or denying the declarative sentence she uttered).

What difference does it make whether an interlocutor can offer reasons to accept what he has accepted or to reject what he has rejected? The doxastic *commitments* involved, the stances taken up, the attitudes adopted, are the same either way. But it is also an integral feature of doxastic commitments that one's *entitlement* to those (perhaps carelessly undertaken) commitments is always potentially at issue. For in taking up a doxastic stance one renders oneself liable to demands for justification, for exhibition of reasons to accept or reject the claim one has accepted or rejected. One's *liberty* to commit oneself, to adopt that attitude and acquire that status, is not an enduring *license* to do so. Reasons matter because other practitioners must distinguish between the acceptances and rejections the speaker in question is *entitled* to, in virtue of having *reasons* to adopt those attitudes, and those the speaker is *not* entitled to, because the speaker is unable to defend those commitments by offering reasons when suitably challenged to do so. It follows that for each interlocutor there must be not only a difference between the attitudes (commitments) he has adopted and those he has not, but also, within those he has adopted, between those he is entitled to or justified in, has rational credentials for, and those that are *mere* commitments, bare of such accompanying entitlements. In *Making It Explicit* Brandom argues that what turns practically on one's entitlement or justification is the testimonial authority of one's act: its capacity to license others to adopt a corresponding attitude. The essential point is that in addition to the *committive* dimension of assertional practice, there is the

critical dimension: the aspect of the practice in which the rational propriety of those commitments, their justificatory status, is assessed. Apart from this critical dimension, the notion of *reasons* gets no grip. It gets its grip from those keeping deontic score on their fellow discursive practitioners, who treat a failure to satisfy the justificatory responsibility implicit in undertaking a doxastic commitment as undercutting the interpersonal authority such a commitment otherwise could exercise.

The second structural observation is that entitlements are fragile in a way that commitments are not. Our picture of discursive practice understands assertion as having a default-and-challenge structure. Assertions can come with default entitlements. But those default entitlements can be lost when the assertion is challenged by offering reasons against the claim. And then, if its authority is to be regained, that entitlement must be re-acquired or vindicated by defenses offering reasons for the challenged claim. Entitlements are vulnerable to being undercut by incompatible collateral commitments. The basic phenomenon here is twofold. It is not impossible for someone to be committed both to accept and to reject the same claimable. But, one cannot then count as *entitled* to those contrary commitments. For each commitment provides a decisive reason against the other. The contrary commitments might have arisen through affirmation and denial of the same sentence—or, more commonly, when one is a (possibly unacknowledged) consequence of other attitudes the subject has self-consciously adopted. The mutual repulsion between the incompatible commitments that is implicit in attitudes of acceptance and rejection takes place at the normative level of rational entitlements to those commitments.

The origin and paradigm of the incompatibility of commitments undercutting their entitlements is the normative collision that occurs when one accepts and rejects the same claimable. But the phenomenon is not limited to that original case where contrary attitudes are adopted towards one and the same claimable. One treats the contents of two claimables as *incompatible* just by taking it that commitment to one precludes entitlement to the other. One forfeits entitlement to one's commitments if one both affirms and denies (accepts and rejects) that the plane figure is a circle. But one incurs the same normative cost if one both accepts that it is a circle and accepts that it is a triangle. That is the practical normative significance of the fact that "*A* is circular" and "*A* is triangular" stand to one another in the reason relation of material incompatibility (Aristotelian contrariety): commitment to one precludes entitlement to the other.

The fact that claimables stand to one another in the reason relation of incompatibility—the fact that commitment to one can preclude entitlement to the other—means that there is a structural asymmetry between the normative statuses of commitment and entitlement, which articulate essential dimensions of the practice of giving and asking for

reasons, making claims and defending and challenging them. Knowing an interlocutor's attitude toward a claimable, whether they accept or reject it, is sufficient to settle their commitment with respect to it. But to assess their *entitlement* to that commitment we have to consult *all* their other commitments. It is not enough that they can cite collateral commitments that provide good reasons for the commitment in question. It is necessary in addition that they have not undertaken commitments that provide equally good reasons against it.

Following a suggestion by Ryan Simonelli, we can assemble these conceptual raw materials so as to characterize both incompatibility and implication in terms of some sets of commitments precluding entitlement to others.[1] In the normative pragmatic vocabulary put in play here, we can define the reason relations like this:

Implication (IMP):
$\Gamma \mathrel{|\!\sim} A$ if and only if commitment to accept all of Γ precludes entitlement to *reject* A.

Incompatibility (INC):
$\Gamma \# A$ if and only if commitment to accept all of Γ precludes entitlement to *accept* A.

On this account, a reason *against* a *rejection* is an implication with that conclusion, since $\Gamma \mathrel{|\!\sim} A$ says that commitment to all of Γ precludes entitlement to reject A. That is a reason *for* an *acceptance*. Dually, an incompatibility $\Gamma \# A$ exhibits its premises as providing both a reason *against* acceptance and (so) a reason *for* rejection.

Notice that these pragmatic readings respect Harman's point. They do not directly dictate what inferences one draws. They address merely the rational cotenability of various attitudes. We have suggested that there is a useful sense in which the semantic contents of the claimables (acceptables/rejectables) expressed by declarative sentences can be understood as consisting in the roles they play in reason relations of these two kinds. These definitions show how semantic contents in this sense can be understood in purely pragmatic terms of commitments and entitlements to accept and reject the claimables that stand to one another in relations of implication and incompatibility. We see here deep connections among the paired distinctions between acceptance/rejection, commitment/entitlement, and implication/incompatibility.

Although we have presented it for the more familiar single-succedent turnstile, this pragmatic definition of implication is recognizably a version of the bilateralist reading Greg Restall and David Ripley recommend in order to make sense of the multisuccedent relation of implication (Restall,

2005, 2009, 2013; Ripley, 2013). Their account has the immediate benefit of demystifying multiple conclusion implications, which many have found hard to parse and motivate. (Why is the comma conjunctive on the left of the turnstile, when combining premises, and disjunctive on the right, when combining conclusions?) They recommend that we understand what is expressed when we write "$\Gamma \nvdash \Delta$" (to put it in the notation we are using here) for sets of sentences Γ and Δ, as the claim that the normative position of anyone who is committed to accept all the sentences in Γ and reject all the sentences in Δ is "out of bounds." This philosophically powerful pragmatic interpretation allows them to understand sequent calculi as consisting of rules that tell us that if some positions are out of bounds, then some others are also. It is then easy to see how logic, so construed, normatively *constrains* reasoners guided by the aim of remaining "in bounds," without pretending to dictate unique answers to the question of what they should *do*, how in particular they should alter their commitments, in particular situations. Simonelli translates their normative pragmatic idiom into the vocabulary of commitment and entitlement familiar from *Making It Explicit*, and then shows how to give a parallel explicit treatment of incompatibility (expressed in Gentzen's sequent calculi by sequents with empty right-hand sides) using the common structure of some commitments precluding entitlement to others.

Even if one acknowledges the felicity and fecundity of Restall and Ripley's bilateral interpretation of the multisuccedent turnstile, one might still find it puzzling that implication relations should be thought of in terms of preclusion of entitlement. The standard way of thinking about implication (implicit in Tarski's formal articulation of it and explicitly endorsed in *Making It Explicit*) seems rather to involve some commitments having other commitments as consequences. This is the analogue, for reason relations among *non*logical (logically atomic) sentences of deductive logical consequence. Is the account being put forward here committed to that idea just being wrong about implication relations? Is there really nothing to be made of that line of thought? Further, it seems that if Γ is incompatible with A then accepting it *commits* one to *reject* A. Here again, Simonelli shows us the way. He points out in effect that we can introduce a pragmatic sense of "implicit" according to the two principles:

> Pragmatically Implicit Acceptance (PIA):
> Any set of commitments that *precludes entitlement* to reject A thereby *implicitly* commits one to accept A.
>
> Pragmatically Implicit Rejection (PIR):
> Any set of commitments that *precludes entitlement* to accept A thereby *implicitly* commits one to *reject* A.

PIA together with IMP entails that if $\Gamma \mathrel{|\!\sim} A$, then commitment to accept all of Γ *implicitly* commits one to accept A. (Here "implicit" derives from "implies.") PIR together with INC entails that if $\Gamma \# A$, then commitment to accept all of Γ *implicitly* commits one to reject A. In this way we can reconstruct what is right about the thought that implication is a matter of acceptance of some premises having commitment to acceptance of a conclusion as its consequence and incompatibility is a matter of acceptance of some premises having commitment to rejection of a conclusion as its consequence. The connection between those characterizations and the modified bilateralist normative pragmatic construal is provided by the implicit acceptance and implicit rejection principles PIA and PIR.

Why should we accept those principles? In what sense are commitments to accept and to reject implicit in preclusions of entitlement to reject and to accept, respectively? The claim of PIA is that if commitment to accept precludes entitlement to reject A, then that same commitment to accept implicitly commits one to accept A. One option, rejecting A, has been ruled out. One could remain agnostic, neither accepting nor rejecting. But that's not right. After all, one of the options has been ruled out. One cannot become entitled to reject A. The only option left standing, the only one available that one could potentially be entitled to is accepting A. By hypothesis, one has not yet explicitly done that. But that attitude of acceptance is implicit in the ruling out (as something one cannot be entitled to) of the only other option, in the sense that it is the only option left open. This is not the same as actually adopting the attitude, and that is what we mark by calling the commitment to accept "implicit," by contrast to the actual, explicit adoption of it. It seems clear both that this is an intelligible *pragmatic* sense of "implicit commitment to accept" and that calling it that is motivated by the rendering impermissible of the only other active option, rejection, and the consequent relative pointlessness of remaining uncommitted.[2]

With the distinction between commitments and entitlements on board, and the example of Restall's and Ripley's normative pragmatic bilateralism in mind, we are in a position to get a clearer view of the phenomenon that led Harman to distinguish reason relations such as implication from reasoning practices such as inferring in the sense of accepting or rejecting some conclusion on the basis of accepting a set of premises. Put in our terms, he points out in effect that the implication $\Gamma \mathrel{|\!\sim} A$ need not entitle one who is committed and entitled to accept all of Γ to accept A, even though the implication implicitly commits him to it. For the interlocutor might have much better reason against A—since $\Delta \# A$—than Γ provides for it. If the interlocutor is also committed and entitled to accept all of Δ, then $\Gamma \mathrel{|\!\sim} A$ precludes entitlement to reject A and $\Delta \# A$ precludes entitlement to accept it. Each explicitly precludes entitlement to the commitment that

the other implicitly requires. The reason relations determine that one may not draw both conclusions, for one is never entitled both to accept and to reject *A*. That position is "out of bounds." Commitments to which one otherwise would be entitled can have that entitlement undercut by collateral incompatible commitments. But the colliding implications and incompatibilities only preclude joint entitlements. They do not say what individual commitments one should accept or reject, what attitudes one should adopt or revise in response to that normative constraint, in the particular practical context of a determinate set of prior commitments. The important basic lesson Harman teaches about relations of implication and incompatibility merely constraining rather than dictating reasoning practices—how one ought to adopt further attitudes in the light of their rational relations to one's antecedent attitudes—does not at all turn on the specifically contrapositive forms of reasoning from implications that he uses to illustrate the point, and can easily arise in their absence.

Acknowledging the Harman point about the importance of clearly distinguishing between reason *relations* of implication and incompatibility, on the one hand, and reasoning *practices* of making inferential moves, on the other hand, is entirely compatible with insisting on an essential relation between them. For it is compatible with taking the central, paradigmatic case of the activity of inferring to be *explicitly* acknowledging commitments (to accept or reject) that are *implicit* in one's other commitments, in the literal sense of being *implied by* them. Adopting the practical attitude of accepting *A* as the expression of one's recognition that one's commitment to accept all of Γ precludes entitlement to reject *A* is inferring *A* from Γ—even though that is not the only form such recognition can take. We will see in the next chapter that there is an intimate connection between this pragmatic notion of a practical attitude (to accept or reject) being implicit in a set of other such practical attitudes and the semantic idea of practical doxastic attitudes not only having explicit conceptual content, but also having implicit conceptual content, determined by what they imply or exclude. Both senses of "implicit" are to be understood in terms of reason relations.

Formulating the issue in the normative pragmatic metavocabulary being recommended also sheds some new light on the puzzle about the symmetry of incompatibility raised earlier. It was mentioned then that thinking just in terms of commitment and entitlement does not evidently provide a reason why the fact that commitment to *A* precludes entitlement to *B* should entail that commitment to *B* precludes entitlement to *A*. It seems intelligible that one of these relations should hold without the other. Why shouldn't incompatibility be nonsymmetric, as implication is? If we look at the normative definitions IMP and INC we get the beginning of an answer to this question. On the side of implication, it is intelligible that

commitment to accept *A* should preclude entitlement to reject *B* without its being the case that commitment to accept *B* should preclude entitlement to reject *A*. That is exactly how it is with "Pedro is a donkey," and "Pedro is a mammal." If you accept that he is a donkey, you are not entitled to deny that he is a mammal. But you can legitimately accept that he is a mammal and deny that he is a donkey, since he might be a capybara. The implication "Pedro is a donkey" $\mid\sim$ "Pedro is a mammal" rules out the position in which one accepts that he is a donkey and denies that he is a mammal. It says nothing about the legitimacy of switching the doxastic valence of those attitudes.

By contrast, we are to read "Pedro is a donkey" # "Pedro is a capybara" as saying that acceptance of Pedro being a donkey rules out entitlement to accept Pedro being a capybara. By contrast to the case of implication, the valence of the commitments in the case of incompatibility is the same. The Simonelli reading of implication in terms of preclusion of entitlement is recognizably a version of the Restall-Ripley reading of one's position being normatively "out of bounds" if one both accepts the premises and rejects the conclusion. Applying and extending that model to the case of incompatibility understands INC as a version of what we would put in Restall-Ripley bilateralist terms as that the position in which one accepts both the premises and the conclusion is out of bounds. But since acceptance is involved in both cases, this is saying that accepting all of the elements of the *set* one gets by adding the conclusion to the premises is "out of bounds." That is just what Gentzen represents by a sequent with an empty right-hand side. That marks the *set* as incoherent. Incompatibilities read off of that incoherent set will be *de jure* symmetric.

This argument is not decisive. If *A*#*B*, then commitment to accept *A* precludes entitlement to accept *B whether or not one is entitled to accept A*. It does follow that one cannot be entitled to accept both *A* and *B*. But it does not follow from that fact that mere commitment to *B* precludes entitlement to *A*. On the Simonelli reading, commitment to *A* precludes entitlement to *B*. (In the general—but still single-succedent—case, $\Gamma, A\#B$ if and only if $\Gamma, B\#A$.) The symmetry argument needs that one cannot be entitled to accept all of both the left-hand and the right-hand side of the # turnstile. The extension of the analogy with the Restall-Ripley bilateralist reading of the implication turnstile to a reading of the incompatibility turnstile is suggestive, but not coercive. It is probative, rather than dispositive.

We can use the considerations assembled here to complete the argument, making visible the nature of the pragmatic necessity that incompatibility be understood as a symmetric relation. It requires looking more closely at the dialogical pragmatic context in which those who give and ask for reasons entitling interlocutors to their commitments defend and challenge those commitments. The argument here, too, is due to Ryan Simonelli

(2023). The basic dialogic significance of showing that someone's position is normatively "out of bounds" or that they are not entitled to one of their commitments is presumably to oblige them to change those commitments. In the case we are addressing, this means withdrawing a commitment shown to be incompatible with others that interlocutor has undertaken. It turns out that nonsymmetric incompatibilities cannot serve this purpose. Suppose $A\#B$ but not $B\#A$: commitment to accept A precludes entitlement to accept B, but commitment to accept B does not preclude entitlement to accept A. Now consider an objection to a speaker S who is already committed to accept A and who then asserts B. It is pointed out that S's commitment to accept A is incompatible with commitment to accepting B, so that S cannot be entitled to that commitment to accept B. S might repair his normatively "out of bounds" situation in response to this objection by withdrawing the commitment to accept B. Or, S could hold onto the acceptance of B and withdraw commitment to accepting A. If S does either of these things, S will be back normatively "in bounds" as far as this incompatibility is concerned. But if S makes the repair by withdrawing commitment to accept A, in the case where A is incompatible with B but B is not incompatible with A, he can immediately reassert A, committing to accept it once again. Then it is not open to the objector to point to his acceptance of B as making this move illegitimate, a commitment to which S cannot be entitled. For that he is already committed to accept B is by hypothesis no objection to his acceptance of A. It does not preclude entitlement to that acceptance. The upshot is that nonsymmetric reason relations of incompatibility would be of no practical use in criticizing the commitments of any interlocutor. For any lack of entitlement they invoke can be repaired just by withdrawing the antecedent commitment and then endorsing it once again.

This argument is in some ways analogous to Dutch Book arguments in rational choice theories. It shows that those whose commitments are normatively criticized by invoking nonsymmetric incompatibility relations can immunize themselves from the effects of such criticism by the simple mechanism of withdrawing prior commitments shown to be incompatible with, and so to rule out entitlement to, subsequent commitments, and then reinstating those same commitments. It would be a mistake to think that this argument turns on contingent details of the dialogic rules for challenging an interlocutor's claims by offering reasons against them by exhibiting their incompatibility with other commitments—which, accordingly, preclude entitlement to those claims. One might be thinking of practices in which one was not permitted to withdraw earlier commitments, but "lost" the dialogical game if convicted of incompatible commitments. But the point goes deeper than that. Entitlement-precluding incompatibilities must be assessable with respect to the whole set of

an interlocutor's commitments. The question is whether any of them preclude entitlement to any of the rest. Nonsymmetric incompatibility relations would require distinguishing between two interlocutors who had exactly the same commitments, finding one "out of bounds" and the other "in bounds" normatively, depending on the order in which they had acquired those commitments. The requirement that incompatibilities be symmetric is the requirement that entitlements be assessable relative to the whole set of commitments whose entitlements are being assessed. That rules out one kind of what we might call "doxastic hysteresis," namely the path-dependence of entitlements consequent upon nonsymmetric incompatibility relations. We will see in the next chapter that there are other kinds of doxastic path-dependence, and that it is an important expressive criterion of adequacy for logical vocabularies that they are robust enough to help us reason in such situations.

1.4 Conclusion

In the very broad usage we give to the term here, "pragmatics" addresses discursive practice, the use of linguistic expressions. In the light of the circumscribed ambitions of this volume, we restrict ourselves to considering declarative sentences. Declarative sentences are picked out by their role in expressing practical attitudes of acceptance and rejection, by performances having the pragmatic significance of assertions and denials. One of our leading ideas is that that significance essentially depends upon discursive practices including assertions that stand to other assertions and denials as rational defenses of and challenges to them. Functionally characterizing one speech act as a *rational* defense or challenge is understanding it as providing a *reason for* or *reason against* the practical (we can now say "doxastic") attitude that is defended or challenged.

Our more proximate topic is what we call "reason relations" of implication and incompatibility, which generalize relations of deductive logical consequence and logical inconsistency to material non- or pre-logical reasons for and reasons against. As Harman reminds us, the connection between such relations and norms governing the making of claims and assessments of the success of rational challenges to and defenses of such claims is complex and indirect. The model we use to explicate part of the story is Restall and Ripley's bilateral normative construal of multisuccedent implication. According to that model, to say that one set of sentences Γ implies another set of sentences Δ is to say that the position of an interlocutor who asserts all of Γ and denies all of Δ is normatively out of bounds.

We refine and extend this account in two stages. First, we translate it into a two-sorted deontic normative vocabulary of commitments (to

accept and reject) and entitlements to those commitments, in place of the single-sorted normative vocabulary of "out-of-boundness" governing constellations of practical attitudes conceived in non-normative terms. Second, we adapt an idea of Ryan Simonelli to use this richer normative pragmatic metavocabulary to define reason relations of incompatibility as well as those of implication. These definitions in turn support a dialogic model of discursive practice, in which default entitlements to doxastic commitments ebb and flow through challenges and defenses that consist of offering reasons for and against contested claims. The sinews of this critical rational structure of core discursive practices are the reason relations of implication and incompatibility, which determine what commitments, expressible by sentences, provide reasons for and against (entitling one to accept or reject) what others. Our topic in the rest of the book is a constellation of formal metavocabularies for expressing and redescribing such reason relations, and the investigation of various illuminating relations among those rational metavocabularies.

Against the background of this critical linguistic rationalist picture of discursive practice, hints were offered about the prospects of a broadly inferentialist semantic alternative to truth-based semantics. Where the tradition advances from concern with bivalent truth *values* to a picture of meaning as truth (and falsity) *conditions*, the possibility was raised of advancing instead (or, as we will see, also) from a bilateral understanding of reason relations of implication and incompatibility to an understanding of meaning in terms of the roles sentences play in constellations of reason relations. In subsequent chapters we will make good on this suggestion in the form of a model-theoretic implication-space semantics for conceptual roles defined functionally by their reason relations of implication and incompatibility. We then explore both the relations between this sort of semantic metavocabulary and truth-maker semantics, on the one hand, and how both relate to the version of the bilateral normative pragmatic metavocabulary considered here, on the other.

So we have here both introduced the idea of understanding the central and characteristic *use* of declarative sentences in terms of *reasons* rather than in terms of *truth*, and at least gestured at the possibility of extending this approach to understanding in terms of reasons rather than truth also the *meanings* those sentences express by being used as they are in the making of claims. From a traditional point of view it is remarkable that, in addition to putting issues of truth to one side, the (admittedly abstract) discussion of reason relations involved no essential appeal to *logic* and logical vocabularies. It was acknowledged in passing that we think it is important not to restrict our conception of implication to formal logical consequence as deducibility or derivability and not to restrict our conception of incompatibility to logical inconsistency, though we did

not offer reasons in support of those commitments. We agree with the philosophical tradition not only that logic is intimately related to doxastic reasons, but also with the much stronger claim that one cannot in the end understand reason relations without understanding their relation to what is expressed by logical vocabulary. But we have a very different view about how that works and why that is so. That is the topic to which we turn next.

Notes

1 In presentations to the "Research on Logical Expressivism" (ROLE) working group.

2 The goal here is to articulate a motivation, and in service of that goal many considerations that would be relevant in other argumentative contexts are being suppressed. In particular, one might think that it is criterial of *paradoxical* sentences such as the Liar that subjects end up rationally committed *both* to accepting *and* to rejecting them, or that they are paradigms of sentences rational subjects should endeavor *neither* to accept *nor* to reject. Though we are not concerned to address semantic paradoxes in this work (save for suggesting in passing that they might be considered a species of a wider genus of expressive paradoxes), in Chapter Five we do consider three-valued logics LP (Logic of Paradox) and K3 (Strong Kleene) that have been appealed to in developing these ideas through gluts and gaps (for instance by Graham Priest and Saul Kripke, respectively).