

Handout for Week 2

Philosophy of Language.
Metavocabularies of Reason:
Pragmatics, Semantics, and Logic
<https://sites.pitt.edu/~rbrandom/Courses>

Plan:

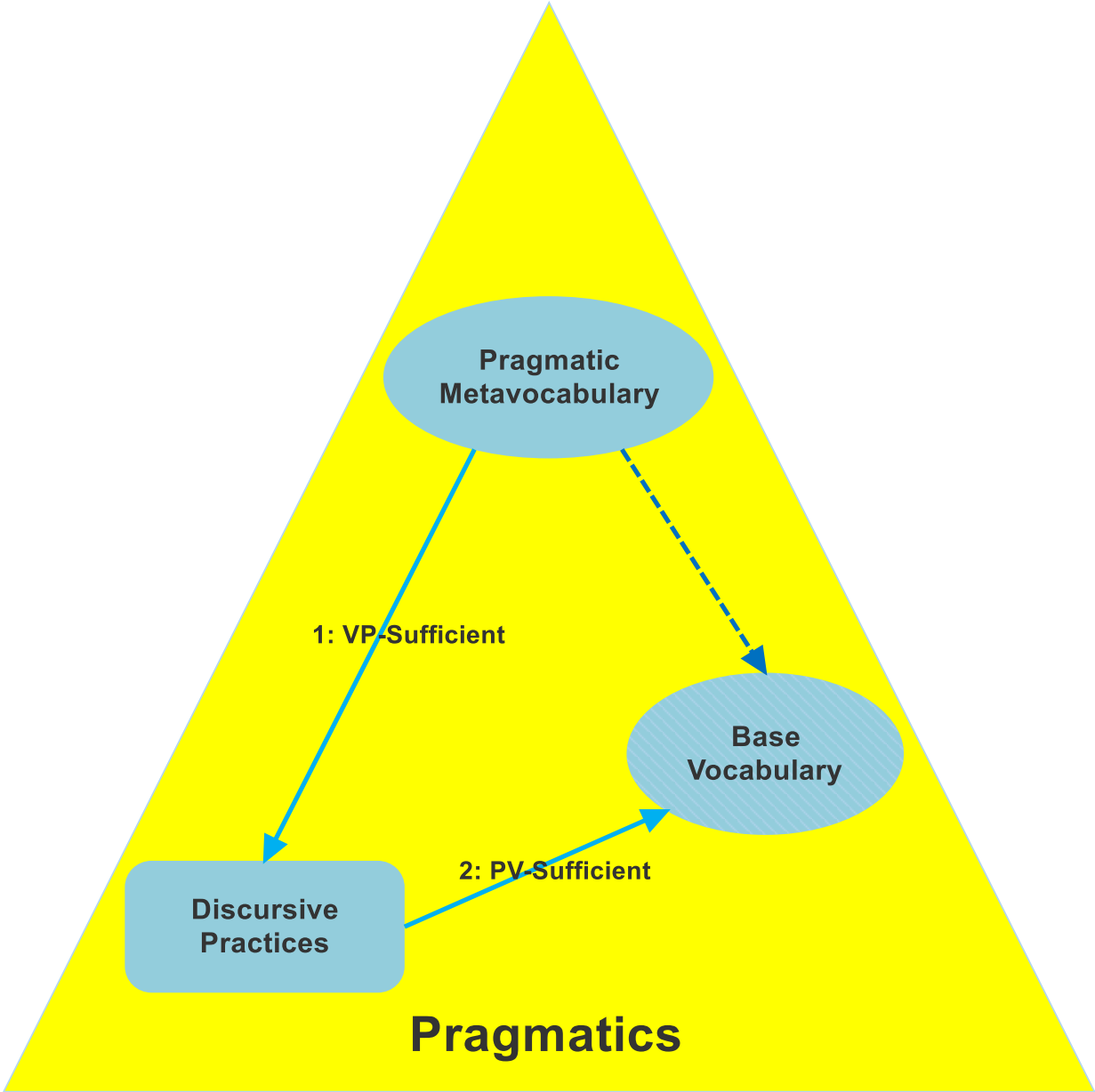
- (I) Normative Pragmatic Metavocabularies
- (II) Expressive Power of Two-Dimensional Pragmatic Metavocabularies
- (III) Asserting as the Core Performance-Kind (Pragmatic Significance) of Discursive Practice
- (IV) (Looking) Back to Kant: Recollecting

The narrative strategy is to say:

- (I) What a *pragmatic* MV is, and why it should be using *normative* concepts;
- (II) Why such a pragmatic MV should be deontically two-dimensional rather than merely binary;
- (III) How to understand asserting as a pragmatic significance performances can have in a Game of Giving and Asking for *Reasons* (GoGAR), and how that can and why it should be used to demarcate specifically *discursive* practices; and
- (IV) how these constraints on and connections between normative statuses and reasons develop ideas already are among the crucial ideas animating Kant's philosophical revolution.

I. Normative Pragmatic MVs:

- 1) Recap
- 2) Kripkenstein
- 3) Regularism/Regulism
- 4) Social Practice response
- 5) Anti-normativism about meaning
- 6) Price 1: Object naturalism vs. Subject naturalism
- 7) Pragmatic MVs as in *BSD* 1
- 8) Price reconstrued in terms of pragmatic MVs



II. Merely Binary vs. Two Dimensional Deontic Pragmatic Vocabularies

1. Some binary deontic vocabularies:
 - Correct/Incorrect
 - Appropriate/Inappropriate (cf. proprieties vs. properties)
 - Right/wrong
 - Good/bad
 - Verified (falsified) /Not verified (falsified)
 - In-bounds/Out-of-bounds (Restall-Ripley bilateralism)
 - Assertible/Non-assertible

2. Assertibility:
Dewey, Sellars, Dummett, Kripke's Wittgenstein

3. A pseudo-two-dimensional halfway house:
Deontic logic: permissible/obligatory (may/must).
Permissible(X) =_{df.} Not-Obligatory-Not(X).
Obligatory(X) =_{df.} Not-Permissible-Not(X).

This strategy goes wrong twice:

- a) It squeezes out possible regions of deontic space:

Perhaps what one is permitted to do is a smaller set of doings than what one is not obliged not to do.

- b) It appeals to and relies on the logical concept of negation in a naïve way—at the wrong point in the account.

Other orders of explanation are possible, and perhaps preferable.

Logical expressivism will explain negation in terms of incompatibility (contradictoriness in terms of contrariety, in Aristotelian terms), and then incompatibility in terms of commitment and entitlement, where committed ≠ not-entitled-not and entitled ≠ not-committed-not.

4. We will appeal to two interlocking, genuinely two-dimensional deontic vocabularies:
 - i. Authority/responsibility.
 - ii. Commitment/entitlement.

III. Assertion

1. Two general points about assertion:
 - a) Can (and I want to claim, should) demarcate specifically *discursive* (linguistic) practices as those that practically accord some performances (take or treat them as having) the pragmatic significance of *assertions*.
 - b) The concepts of assertion and of reasons are reciprocally sense dependent (only intelligible together) and reciprocally reference dependent (globally, each notion is only instantiated where the other is).
2. Think about the claims by which discursive commitments are expressed in terms of the interaction of inferentially articulated *authority* and *responsibility*.
 - i. In making an assertion one lends to the asserted content one's *authority*, licensing others to undertake a corresponding commitment, to use as a premise in *their* reasoning.

Thus one essential aspect of this model of discursive practice is *communication*: the interpersonal, intracontent inheritance of entitlement to commitments.

- ii. In making an assertion one also undertakes a *responsibility*, to justify the claim if appropriately challenged, and thereby to redeem one's entitlement to the commitment acknowledged by the claiming.

Thus another essential aspect of this model of discursive practice is *justification*: the intrapersonal, intercontent inheritance of entitlement to commitments.

3. The *default-and-challenge* (DaC) structure of entitlement and justification shows the essential role played by *reasons* in assertional practices.

To avoid the *Agrippan trilemma*, distinguish justification in the sense of the activity of *justifying* and justification in the sense of a status of being or counting as *justified*.

The latter is the status of entitlement. To for a belief to *be* “justified” in this sense, is for the subject to be *entitled* to a *commitment*.

There are other ways to acquire entitlement besides justifying with reasons.

A principal one is *testimonial*. That is the function of *assertion*.

Two forms of inheritance of entitlement to commitments, by

- a) *Intracontent, interpersonal, inference-and-assertion license*: testimonial inheritance of entitlement).
- b) *Intercontent, intrapersonal inheritance* (vindication) of entitlement by justifying implicational reason relations among contents.

4. The DaC provides specific *epistemological* insights.

It offers a version of the traditional JTB (justified true belief) account of knowledge:

- Corresponding to the Belief condition: One must take the candidate knower to have a doxastic, that is assertible, *commitment*. That is attribute that normative status.

- Corresponding to the Justification condition: One must take the candidate knower to be *entitled* to that commitment. That is attributing another kind of normative status (with the same content).
- Corresponding to the Truth condition: One must take it that what the candidate knower is committed and entitled to is *true*. But doing that, taking something to be true, is just believing it, committing oneself to that same claimable. Doing that is not adopting a practical attitude of *attributing* any status to the candidate knower. Rather it is adopting a practical attitude *oneself* of undertaking *commitment* to the same content one took the candidate knower to be both committed and entitled to.

IV. Recollecting Kant

Kant's normative turn: Judgings and intentional doings are things we are in a distinctive sense *responsible* for. They are exercises of our authority to undertake *commitments*.

Kant is a crucial predecessor of this account of asserting and reasons, transposed into a normative pragmatic MV that focuses on *individual abilities* rather than a *social practices* in talking about two-dimensional normative statuses.

“We have opposed throughout the view of asserting as the exteriorization of a prior interior act of judging. Judging, rather, is the interiorization of an exterior act of asserting.”

[Dummett, *Frege's Philosophy of Language*.]

1. The Basic Kantian Normative Status (BKNS):

The *authority* (right, entitlement) to *commit* oneself, that is to make oneself responsible. In terms of this complex, two-dimensional deontic status, Kant will explain:

- Autonomy
- Freedom
- Dignity
- Respect

This constellation of ideas is the source of his criterion of demarcation of the normative, the way he distinguishes *commitments* (*normative statuses*) that determine what one *must* do in the sense of *ought* to do, from causes (*natural states*) that determine what one *must* do as a result of compulsion or coercion.

2. The connection of *judgments* to *reasons* is through Kant's idea of a *synthetic unity of apperception*, and of the rational activity of synthesis that produces and maintains it.

Apperceiving is being aware in the sense of sapience, rather than mere sentience.

Judgment is the minimal unit of awareness in this sense of apperception because it is the minimal unit of *responsibility*.

- The *subjective form* of judgement is the “I think” that Kant says is the emptiest of all representations, because it can accompany all of them.

It stands for *who is* responsible or committed, whose authority is invested in the judgement.

- The *objective form* of judgement is the “object = x” that one is representing or judging *about*.

It stands for what one is making oneself responsible *to* in judging.

- And the concept one is applying determines what one is responsible *for* in judging.

What one must do, the task responsibility one undertakes in judging, is to integrate (“synthesize”) one's commitment into a constellation of collateral commitments exhibiting the rational unity characteristic of apperception. That overarching rational task responsibility has three parts:

- The *justificatory* responsibility to have *reasons for* the commitments in one's repertoire.
- The *ampliative* responsibility to acknowledge commitment to the consequences of the commitments in one's repertoire, i.e. to those one's other commitments provide *reasons for*.
- The *critical* responsibility to reject and extrude commitments that are incompatible with one's other commitments, that is, that those other commitments provide decisive *reasons against*.